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MODERN ENGLISH VERSE

THE IDEAL BOOK HOUSE
194- ANARKALI LAHORE

A SELECTION OF MODERN ENGLISH VERSE

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PREFACE

In selecting poems for our graduate students two considerations stand out as important to me. Firstly the language barriers must be modified, the student should come quickly and without too much difficulty to feel at home with this poetry. Poetry is the most magical form of literature, and in selecting these poems care has been taken to let the magic and the sense of wonder that all great poetry evokes flood out the fear and the inhibition that the printed English word casts over our students. Therefore the simpler modern English poems have been chosen, those in which the idiom and sentiments are contemporary in order to exclude as far as possible the sense of "foreigness". Our students are to a certain extent familiar with the modern English

idiom. Great poetry carries its suggestions of eternity both in old and new modes of linguistic expression. The teacher will discern these subtle indications of a supra-normal world, a world transcending the world of daily reality, in the poems. With the guidance of the teacher and the students own ease with uncomplicated expression the experience of these poems should be spiritually and humanly fulfilling.

Secondly I have tried to select poens with a universal appeal, caste in a context that is readily assimilable by our Pakistani young man and woman. To avoid the chance of cultural shock the poem chosen are intended to merge with the inner life of their readers.

A poem has an inner and an outer reality. The outer reality is the choice of words, the images, the meter, rhyme scheme and so on. The inner reality is to be experienced and not necessarily to be expressed in its fullness. It cannot ever be expressed in its fulness as the connois-

seurs of literature know. The teacher can help in heightening the poet's *suggestion*. The final meaning eludes, because in great art there is no finality. Finality excludes eternity, and eternity is what poetry is about. But also because there is no final or one defined meaning poetry is for all men. And this is the attitude we teachers must encourage our students to adopt towards not only English poetry but poetry in any tongue apart from that in our own.

Experience, simultaneously held and formed by aesthetics makes poetry a joyous experience, be it of pain, sorrow, contemplation, delight or even ugliness. Poetry transforms from the commonplace and the routine to the exceptional. It is experience of the exceptional in goodness and truth, that young and old alike need. The old perhaps even more so. The young are still nearer innocence and will in some ways leap into the heart of poetry with greater ease than their forebearers. If the teacher with his greater experience can point out excellences to his young student, the student can

cast the glory of his fresh insights on to the poems. A poet we are told sees with new eyes and hears with new ears. Who better fitted than the youthful to capture this pristine "newness" of the world of poetry?

The poems chosen express a variety of experiences all of which add up to the enrichment of our normal sensibilities. One of the direct intentions of education in the humanities is to evoke the many hidden areas of the personality into coordinated creative activity. Poetry enjoyed and studied in a mood of ease, not of fear, can help considerably in encouraging richness and creativity of personality. A developing country certainly needs to, and also thinks and functions in terms of quantity, but because of this very emphasis on quantity, our need for quality grows commensurately. Quantity we have to take care is not allowed to overcome quality; in which case of course quantity itself will deteriorate in the long run.

All that is great and good is united in Oneness. As teachers it is our function to provoke, and enrich this vast and profound sense of oneness in our students There is only One God although His ways and His men are multifarious. There is the One and the Many What better way than for the teacher to open up for the young, the universal truths that lie in the literature of a foreign tongue? In the final analysis all men are one, and indeed, there is only One God. As I have said above the poems chosen have been selected with an eye to their accommodability to the experience of people living in a very different context from that of the men and women who wrote the poems. Ours is a unitive psyche and it should not be difficult for the teacher and the taught to perceive the underlying universal miracle of truth and beauty that all great poetry reveals.

INTRODUCTION

The central problem in the teaching of poetry may be stated in terms of the old battle between the intuitional approach to the teaching of poetry and the analytical, or between the "intuitionalists" and the "analysts." I suppose the battle began when poetry first had to be taught. Primitive folk poetry did not have to be taught. The medium was no barrier, and the emotions of the poet could go straight to the hearts of his audience. I mention this point here because it is the poet's medium, his language, which is, in the present state of our culture. the source of all our difficulties.

As I intimated at the very outset. the battle between these two opposed camps must have been fought at many an English teachers' conference, and I suspect that the

adherents of each camp went away every time more certified in their own faith. That there is still a wide divergence among us on this our capital problem may be shown by the remark which a critics leson plan on "Thanatopsis" elicited from at least one English teacher ; "The teacher who does what is detailed here should be hanged, drawn and quartered." Now that statement, as Keats said of poetry, "Overwhelms with a fine excess." It expresses an attitude towards the teaching of poetry with which many of us would agree, though perhaps with certain important reservations. But we see at once what a chasm yawns between the advocates of these two methods of approach and what a fine fervour the subject is capable of arousing.

In its extreme form the intuitional method, I suppose, may be likened to the method of the Hindu geometer of old who drew a diagram for his students and said to them "Behold." So the teacher of poetry might say to his students, "Listen," read

them a poem, and let it go at that. There are some poems to be sure, that may be presented in just that way. Anything I may add, for example, to "Behold her single in the field," I feel to be supererogatory, and reading simple lyrics of that kind to a class, with little or no comment, is I believe, a valuable experience for our pupils. Apart from the value of the poet's utterance itself, it is good for them to know that the poet may often speak straight to their hearts. Unfortunately that is not true of the larger portion of the poetry that we attempt to teach our pupils. How will the intuitional approach work with Noye's *Appearance and Reality*, W.H. Davie's *An Epitaph* and Auden's *To An Unknown Citizen*. Of course there is an obvious answer; do not teach any poetry in which the meddling intellect (to use Wordsworth's phrase) will intrude upon the simple, naked emotion. I agree that from a certain point of view that answer is the best way out of our difficulty. We might make an anthology of simple poetry, and some of our poems we

might take from the Anthology of Pure Poetry that George Moore published some years ago. But of course I am stating the intuitional approach in its extremest form with all its logical implications. In actual practice the intuitional teacher will teach Yeats' *White Birds* as well as W. H. Davies *An Epitaph* Only in teaching the former he would say, "Let us not worry too much about how the poet has said this or that; what he means exactly here or there; whether this phrase is one kind of poetic figure or another; or even what the whole poem is precisely about, both in its emotional and ideational origin and in its execution. Anything we say will be only so much more barrier between the poet and the pupil. Has the pupil been made to *feel* something—no matter what? If so, let's have done."

Now the "analyst" will step in and say, "It is quite important, if not very often downright necessary, for the pupil to know what gave the poet the initial push, so to speak, in writing the poem. What peculiar

interaction between the poet and his world gave rise to this particular expression in the poem? It is important for the pupil to know that the poet often says his best things not as we say them in ordinary speech; and calling attention to them, even labelling them by means of the names of various poetic figures, will bring the pupil closer to the poet's emotion and thought. Finally, it is important for the pupil to have some knowledge of the poet's mechanics, of poetic form, of versification. Poetry, psychologically considered, may be the spontaneous overflow of emotion, but its expression in verse makes it also an art form, and some knowledge of the secrets of the art—of the musical possibilities of words, for example—will add to the pupil's pleasure and enhance his understanding.

Now here we have the two divergent methods of approach. Let us note at once that in actual practice none of us adheres strictly to one or the other. Our practice is much wiser than our theory. We are all unconsciously empirical; that is, when con-

fronted with a poetry-teaching situation in the class-room, we know that one type of poem will require different handling from another. As readers of poetry we distinguish among various types of poems. It is quite true that we often use the term poetry in a generic sense, and when we use it that way we do mean something. We may read a passage, a line, or even a phrase—whether in verse or not does not matter—and we say at once "This is poetry." We are sure of it and no one can tell us otherwise. Yet different poems have varying kinds and degrees of appeal for us, and we may distinguish among them. We may find the magic essence, as in some of Swinburne's poems or Coleridge's, in a certain type of lyrical expression, where sense is nothing, if it is at all there, but which instead feeds our imagination with things "that never were on land or sea." Or we may find it in a poet's expression of universal truth, truth charged with emotion, as in the great passages of Shakespeare. Certainly when we as teachers attempt to get the poet's communication

over to our pupils, the kind of communication, as well as the poet's means of expression, his language, must be a determining factor in our method of presentation.

For, no matter what the poet says to us, whether he says :

> A weariness comes from these dreamers, dew dabbled the lily and rose ;
> Ah dream not of them my beloved, the flame of the meteor that goes,
> Or the flame of the blue star that lingers hung low in the fall of the dew ;
> For I would we were changed to white birds on the wandering foam : I and you."

He says it by means of words. His words may give us a definite image (as certain poets have tried at all costs to do) or a definite idea which we may translate into a prose statement, not of course, as a substitute for the poet's words, but merely as a support for our understanding and a hint to our imagination. Or he may just wake up old, far off echoes within us, elusive, indefinable,

unstatable in any proposition. Whatever he says to us, he must assume a certain intellectual kinship with us; that is, he must assume that we have a certain system of meaning associated with ordinary things, and that when his imagination scrambles up those meanings in a way to make us see all sorts of associations in things that we have never seen before and hence feel more intensely about them, he must be sure that we can follow him. Should he even take flight from our natural, recognizable world altogether, his "nonsense" must still be based upon a core of sense in us. That is why the familiar distinctions between intellect and imagination are so often dangerous if not downright misleading. The poet, the lunatic and the lover may be of imagination all compact, but certainly the poet must use the world of sense as a springboard for his fancy, and if he is going to arouse our feeling he must "talk sense" to us first. "Where there is no sense there is no feeling" is sound psychology and quite literally true.

. Let us then have done with the notion that we must not contaminate the emotion of a poem with talk of its meaning or its sense basis. Some teachers suffer from a veritable phobia of analysis. But let us see exactly what we mean by analysis, and the fear is at once dispelled. In that excellent little book "The Name and Nature of Poetry," A. E. Housman, says: "And I think that to transfuse emotion—not to transmit thought, but to set up in the reader's sense a vibration corresponding to what was felt by the writer is the peculiar function of poetry." All genuine lovers of poetry will agree at once. But the question for us teachers is, "How great a foundation of sense shall we build in the pupil for this emotional vibration to take place?" As has been suggested above, it will vary with different poems. Generally, we might say as much as will bring the pupil into what may be called the "emotional interior" of the poem.

But let us be more specific. It is often possible to build up the sense of the poem

on the pupil's own experience, either actual or potential. We may quite agree with those teachers who say that our pupils may not thrill much to the story of how Keats came to write "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer." But have not they at some time or other, even in their relatively short lives, experienced a similar sense of the joy of discovery? Have not many of them, perhaps, stayed up half the night, held by a book (no matter of what kind) and unable to put it down? I was talking to one of my colleagues right after a stormy discussion on the teaching of poetry, while we were both still full of it, and she was telling me how she builds up the emotional sense basis in the case of another sonnet by Keats, the one that begins "When I have fears that I may cease to be." "I know," she says to her pupils, "you are all ambitious. You are all going to be great doctors, scientists, or perhaps authors. Suppose you knew you had the ability you had the stuff—there was no doubt about it—and you also knew that a fatal disease was creeping up on you; that

you probably would not live to realize your great ambition; how would you feel about life and the world and the treachery of fate?" That is an admirable example of what is meant by leading the pupil into the centre of the poet's emotion. The teacher may often use his own experience instead of the pupil's to provide the life-situation.

Of course, it may not be possible, nor is it always necessary, to provide that kind of sense basis for every poem we teach. It may be a simple matter in some poems and a difficult one in others. For example, I do not know how to teach the "Ode to the West Wind" without telling the pupils something about Shelley's temperament, his vision of the perfectibility of human life, and his use of the west wind as a symbol for his own striving, tortured soul. I may be wrong, but I feel if they do not get that out of the poem, they get nothing.

But now one may ask, "What about the sense of each stanza, each line, each phrase, each word?" The answer must be couched in general terms. I should say, as much as

will contribute to the meaning of the whole. While it is true that up to a certain point appreciation waits upon understanding, we all know nowadays that too much of the letter will kill the spirit. Perhaps in most of the poetry, we teach, the line for line type of analysis is unnecessary. Particularly is this true of syntactical analysis which introduces too many elements extraneous to the poem. On the other hand, if we teach Milton, what are we to do with his mythology and his compactness of expression which is certainly too much for the average student to cope with? No rule of thumb principle will apply here.

The only test is an empirical one ; how much sense is needed in a particular poem for the "emotional vibration" to take place? Let me also say in this connection that for myself I am not a great believer in written paraphrases or leading questions. They may be used sparingly when the teacher has the definite purpose of giving the pupil practice in paraphrasing for examination purposes. The danger in excessive paraphrasing is that

it often substitutes a bad piece of prose for the poem. As for the regular use of series of written questions, I believe it introduces a cut and dried element into teaching situations where, after all, our aim is pleasure and emotional response. The reverse type of question in which the pupil is asked to recapture the essence or crux of a poem I believe to be admirable for in that way an identification, is established between the pupil and the impact of the poem as a whole. But this type of question, most teachers of poetry would agree, can be effective only after the necessary foundation in sense has been laid for the poem.

A word about the poet's language. When we talk about the language of the poet, we are only stating the sense feeling problem in a different way. For the poet, when his poem is completed, there is no distinction between his thought-emotion and his language. The "what" and the "how" are identical. Change one word, or even the position of a word, and from the poet's viewpoint the poem is altered. It is for us when

we read the words of the poet and associate our meanings with his that the distinction exists. We say how beautifully or how compactly he has said this or that. We also become aware that, in general, the poet's language differs in important ways from ordinary speech, though some poets, like Day Lewis, MacNeice and Auden for example, set an ideal for themselves to approximate to ordinary speech as much as possible. Certainly, poetic rhythm, whether in a line from Pope or from one of our modern vers librists is different from the rhythm of ordinary speech. Thus we have metaphor (using that term in its generic sense) and rhythm, which have distinguished poetic speech since the beginning, and soon we are deep in the subject of poetics.

Now the question for us is, "To what degree shall we make our pupils conscious of the poet's language as thus understood ?" If we are going to give our students some knowledge of poetics, how shall we present it ? A reasonable amount of it, administered in small doses throughout the whole course

and adapted to teaching occasions as they arise, will in the long run materially help our pupils in the appreciation of poetry. We might take a hint from the present status of grammar; we have functional grammar; why not functional poetics? But here again the question of "where," and "how" must be answered with an eye to the varying needs of pupils in different grades and in different teaching situations.

Our approach here, too, should be empirical, and we should steer clear of any absolutes theory as well as in our practice. The end of appreciation is not served by making a fetish, as an older romantic psychology did, of any psychological category. There is no absolute distinction between sense and feeling or between intellect and emotion. Rather the two are united in the whole process of appreciation. When a pupil does not know what a poem is all about, his imagination will not be stirred and he cannot be made to feel. On the other hand, since pleasure should always be our aim, excessive analysis

in all its forms, beyond what is necessary for the sense basis of the poem, can be profitably omitted. When we go beyond that point, then in Wordsworth's phrase, we often "murder to dissect." In actual practice the most successful teachers of poetry have always effected a nice adjustment between understanding and imagination. They have always known how far sense analysis is helpful and where it should stop. They have also known how important in the total process is the contagion of their own personality; their voice, their manner, their dramatic ability, their love of the subject. In other words they have always embodied in their practice the old dictum of Horace; "If you want me to weep, you must weep." Of course, even for the best teacher the teaching of a poem is a venture into the unknown. He cannot ever be sure of success, nor can he measure it in quantitative terms. But one thing at least he can do; he can approach his task with a sound psychology and with all the enthusiasm and will to succeed he is able to muster.

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THE CHILDREN AND SIR NAMELESS

Thomas Hardy

Sir Nameless, once of Athelhall, declared :
"These wretched children romping in my park
Trample the herbage till the soil is bared,
And yap and yell from early morn till dark !
Go keep them harnessed to their set routines :
Thank God I've none to hasten my decay ;
For green remembrance there are better means
Than offspring, who but wish their sires away."

Sir Nameless of that mansion said anon :
"To be perpetuate for my mightiness
Sculpture must image me when I am gone."
—He forthwith summoned carvers there express
To shape a figure stretching seven-odd feet

(For he was tall) in alabaster stone,
With shield, and crest, and casque, and sword
  complete ;
When done a statelier work was never known.

Three hundred years hied ; Church-restorers came,
And, no one of his lineage being traced
They thought an effigy so large in frame
Best fitted for the floor. There it was placed,
Under the seats for schoolchildren. And they
Kicked out his name, and hobnailed off his nose ;
And, as they yawn though sermon-time, they say,
"Who was this old stone man beneath our toes ?"

SURVIEW

Thomas Hardy

A cry from the green-grained sticks of the fire
   Made me gaze where it seemed to be :
'Twas my own voice talking therefrom to me
On how I had walked when my sun was higher—
   My heart in its arrogancy.

"*You held not to whatsoever was true,*"
   Said my own voice talking to me :
"*Whatsoever was just you were slack to see;*
Kept not things lovely and pure is view,"
   Said my own voice talking to me.

"You slighted her that endureth all,"
Said my own voice talking to me ;
"Vaunteth not, trusteth hopefully ;
That suffereth long and is kind withal,"
Said my own voice talking to me.

"You taught not that which you set about,"
Said my own voice talking to me ;
"That the greatest of things is Charity .."
—And the sticks burnt low, and the fire went out
And my voice ceased talking to me.

3

desert چھوڑجانا. ویران

NO BUYERS

Thomas Hardy

A load of brushes and baskets and cradles and chairs
Labours along the street in the rain :
With it a man, a woman, a pony with whiteybrown hairs.
The man foots in front of the horse with a shambling sway
At a slower tread than a funeral train,
While to a dirge-like tune he chants his wares,
Swinging a Turk's-head brush (in a drum-major's way
When the bandsmen march and play).

A yard from the back of the man is the whiteybrown
  pony's nose :
He mirrors his master in every item of pace and pose :
    He stops when the man stops, without being told,
  And seems to be eased by a pause ; too plainly he's old
      Indeed, not strength enough shows
    To steer the disjoined wagon straight,
  Which wriggles left and right in a rambling line,
  Deflected thus by its own warp and weight,
  And pushing the pony with it in each incline.

    The woman walks on the pavement verge,
      Parallel to the man :
  She wears an apron white and wide in span,
And carries a like Turk's head, but more in nursing-
  wise :
  Now and then she joins in his dirge,
  But as if her thought were on distant things,
  The rain clams her apron till it clings.
So, step by step, they move with their merchandise,
    And nobody buys.

SPRING AND DEATH

Gerard Manley Hopkins

I had a dream. A wondrous thing :
It seem'd an evening in the Spring ;
—A little sickness in the air
From too much fragrance everywhere :—
As I walk'd a stilly wood,
Sudden, Death before me stood :
In a hollow lush and damp,
He seem'd a dismal mirky stamp
On the flowers that were seen
His charnelhouse-grate ribs between,
And with coffin-black he barred the green.
'Death,' said I, 'what do you here
At this Spring season of the year ?'

'I mark the flowers ere the prime
Which I may tell at Autumn-time.'
Ere I had further question made
Death was vanish'd from the glade.
Then I saw that he had bound
Many trees and flowers round
With a subtle web of black,
And that such a sable track
Lay along the grasses green
From the spot where he had been.
  But the Spring-tide pass'd the same ;
Summer was as full of flame ;
Autumn-time no earlier came.
And the flowers that he had tied,
As I mark'd, not always died
Sooner than their mates ; and yet
Their fall was fuller of regret :
It seem'd so hard and dismal thing,
Death, to mark them in the Spring.

GOD'S GRANDEUR

Gerard Manley Hopkins

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
  It will flame out, like shining from shook foil :
  It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod ?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod ;
  And all is seared with trade ; bleared, smeared with toil ;
  And wears man's smudge and shares man's smell : the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent ;
  There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
  Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
  World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

Simile. تشبيه

Metaphor. استعارة

Daisy is used ك

metaphorically.

6

DAISY

Francis Thompson 1859—1907

Where the thistle lifts a purple crown
  Six foot out of the turf,
And the harebell shakes on the windy hill--
  O the breath of the distant surf !—

The hills look over on the South,
  And southward dreams the sea ;
And, with the sea-breeze hand in hand,
  Came innocence and she.

Where 'mid the gorse the raspberry
  Red for the gatherer springs,
Two children did we stray and talk
  Wise, idle, childish things.

She listened with big-lipped surprise,
  Breast-deep 'mid flower and spine :
Her skin was like a grape, whose veins
  Run snow instead of wine.

She knew not those sweet words she spake
  Nor knew her own sweet way ;
But there's never a bird, so sweet a song
  Thronged in whose throat that day !

Oh. there were flowers in Storrington
  On the turf and on the spray ;
But the sweetest flower on Sussex hills
  Was the Daisy-flower that day !

Her beauty smoothed earth's furrowed face !
  She gave me tokens three :—
A look, a word of her winsome mouth,
  And a wild raspberry.

A berry red, a-guileless look,
  A still word—strings of sand !
And yet they made my wild, wild heart
  Fly down to her little hand.

For. standing artless as the air,
  And candid as the skies,
She took the berries with her hand
  And the love with her sweet eyes.

The fairest things have fleetest end :
  Their scent survives their close,
But the rose's scent is bitterness
  To him that loved the rose !

She looked a little wistfully
  Then went her sunshine way :—
The sea's eye had a mist on it
  And the leaves fell from the day.

She went her unremembering way,
  She went, and left in me
The pang of all the partings gone,
  And partings yet to be.

She left me marvelling why my soul
  Was sad that she was glad ;
At all the sadness in the sweet,
  The sweetness in the sad.

Still, still I seemed to see her, still
  Look up with soft replies,
And take the berries with her hand,
  And the love with her lovely eyes.

Nothing begins, and nothing ends,
  That is not paid with moan ;
For we are born in other's pain,
  And perish in our own.

7

ON THE ROAD

Charles G. D. Roberts

Ever just over the top of the next brown rise
I expect some wonderful thing to flatter my eyes.
"What's yonder?" I ask of the first wayfarer I meet.
"Nothing!" he answers, and looks at my travel-worn
feet.

"Only more hills and more hills, like the many you've
passed,
With rough country between, and a poor enough inn
at the last."
But already I am a-move, for I see he is blind,
And I hate that old grumble I've listened to time out
of mind.

I've tramped it too long not to know there is truth
in it still,

That lure of the turn of the road, of the crest of the
hill.
So I breast me the rise with full hope, well assured
I shall see
Some new prospect of joy, some brave venture a tip-
toe for me.

For I have come far and confronted the calm and the
strife.
I have fared wide, and bit deep in the apple of life.
It is sweet at the rind, but oh, sweeter still at the
core ;
And whatever be gained, yet the reach of the morrow
is more.

At the crest of the hill I shall hail the new summits
to climb,
The demand of my vision shall beggar the largess of
time.
For I know that the higher I press, the wider I view,
The more's to be ventured and visioned, in worlds
that are new.

So when my feet, failing, shall stumble in ultimate
dark,
And faint eyes no more the high lift of the pathway
shall mark,
There under the dew I'll lie down with my dreams,
for I know
What bright hill-tops the morning will show me, all
red in the glow.

8

THE WHITE BIRDS

William Butler Yeats

I would that we were, my beloved, white birds on the
foam of the sea !
We tire of the flame of the meteor, before it can fade
and flee ;
And the flame of the blue star of twilight, hung low
on the rim of the sky,
Has awaked in our hearts, my beloved, a sadness
that may not die.

A weariness comes from those dreamers, dew-dabbled,
the lily and rose ;
Ah, dream not of them, my beloved, the flame of the
meteor that goes,

Or the flame of the blue star that lingers hung low in
the fall of the dew ;
For I would we were changed to white birds on the
wandering foam : I and you !

I am haunted by numberless islands, and many
a Danaan shore,
Where Time would surely forget us, and Sorrow
come near us no more ;
Soon far from the rose and the lily, and free of the
flames would we be,
Were we only white birds, my beloved, buoyed out on
the foam of the sea !

9

THE WILD SWANS AT COOLE

William Butler Yeats

The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky ;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine-and-fifty swans.

The nineteenth autumn has come upon me
Since I first made my count ;
I saw, before I had well finished,
All suddenly mount
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings
Upon their clamorous wings.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,
And now my heart is sore.
All's changed since I, hearing at twilight,
The first time on this shore,
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,
Trod with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,
They paddle in the cold
Companionable streams or climb the air ;
Their hearts have not grown old ;
Passion or conquest, wander where they will,
Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water.
Mysterious, beautiful ;
Among what rushes will they build,
By what lake's edge or pool
Delight men's eyes when I awake some day
To find they have flown away ?

WHEN YOU ARE OLD

William Butler Yeats

When you are old and grey and full of sleep,
And nodding by the fire, take down this book,
And slowly read ; and dream of the soft look
Your eyes had once, and of their shadows deep ;

How many loved your moments of glad grace,
And loved your beauty with love false or true ;
But one man loved the pilgrim soul in you,
And loved the sorrows of your changing face ;

And bending down beside the glowing bars
Murmur, a little sadly, how love fled,
And paced upon the mountains overhead,
And hid his face amid a crown of stars.

11

THE CALL

Charlotte Mew.

From our low seat beside the fire
  Where we have dozed and dreamed and watched
    the glow
  Or raked the ashes, stopping so
We scarrcely saw the sun or rain
  Above, or looked much higher
Than this same quiet red or burned-out fire,
          To-night we heard a call,
          A rattle on the window-pane,
          A voice on the sharp air,
And felt a breath stirring our hair,
  A flame within us : Something swift and tall
  Swept in and out and that was all.

Was it a bright or a dark angel ? Who can know ?
It left no mark upon the snow,
But suddenly it snapped the chain,
Unbarred, flung wide the door
Which will not shut again ;
And so we cannot sit here any more.
We must arise and go :
The world is cold without
And dark and hedged about
With mystery and enmity and doubt,
But we must go
Though yet we do not know
Who called, or what marks we shall leave upon the snow.

12

AN EPITAPH

William Henry Davies

Beneath this stone lies one good man ; and when
We say his kindly thought towards all men
Was as generous to the living as to the dead—
What more for any mortal could be said ?
His only enemies were those he tried
To help, and failed ; who blamed him, in their pride,
Forgetting that his power was not as great
As his intention—and their own weak state.
And if he met with men too slow to move
Into the fullness of his own clear love,
He looked for the fault in his own self, and not
Blamed other men like our more common lot.
His boundless trust and innocence of evil
Tempted the base and mean, and helped the devil.
Since such a man, without suspicion, kind,
Was duped by many a false, ungrateful mind,
He's gone to Heaven—because he lived so well
That many a wretch through him has gone to hell.

TO A CANDLE

Walter de la Mare

Burn stilly, thou ; and come with me
I'll screen thy rays Now, Look, and see,
Where, like a flower furled,
Sealed from this busy world,
Tranquil brow, and lid, and lip,
One I love lies here asleep.

Low upon her pillow is
A head of such strange loveliness—
Gilded-brown, unwoven hair—
That dread springs up to see it there :
Lest so profound a trance should be
Death's momentary alchemy.

Venture closer, then Thy light
Be little day to this small night ;
Fretting through her lids it makes
The lashes stir on those pure cheeks ;
The scarcely-parted lips, it seems,
Pine, but in vain, to tell her dreams.

Every curve and hollow shows
In faintest shadow—mouth and nose ;
Pulsing beneath the silken skin
The milk-blue blood rills out and in ;
A bird's might be that slender bone,
Magic itself to ponder on.

Time hath spread its nets in vain ;
The child she was is home again ;
Veiled with Sleep's seraphic grace,
How innocent yet how wise a face !
Mutely entreating, it seems to sigh, -
"Love made me It is only I.

"Love made this house wherein there dwells
A thing divine, and homeless else.
Not mine the need to ponder why
In this sweet prison I exult and sigh.
Not mine to bid you hence. God knows
It was for joy he shaped the rose."

See, she stirs. A hand at rest
Slips from above that gentle breast,
White as winter-mounded snows,
Summer-sweet as that wild rose...
Thou lovely thing ! Ah, welladay !
Candle, I dream. Come, come away !

THE LISTENERS

Walter de la Mare

"Is there anybody there ?" said the Traveller,
  Knocking on the moonlit door ;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
  Of the forest's ferny floor ;
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
  Above the Traveller's head :
And he smote upon the door again a second time ;
  "Is there anybody there ?" he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller ;
  No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
  Where he stood perplexed and still.

But only a host of phantom listeners
  That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
  To that voice from the world of men :
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
  That goes down to the empty hall,
Hearkening in an air stirred and shaken
  By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
  Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
  'Neath the starred and leafy sky ;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
  Louder, and lifted his head :—
"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
  That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
  Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still house
  From the one man left awake :
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
  And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
  When the plunging hoofs were gone.

A TUFT OF FLOWERS

Robert Frost

I went to turn the grass once after one
Who moved it in the dew before the sun.

The dew was gone that made his blade so keen
Before I came to view the levelled scene.

I looked for him behind an isle of trees ;
I listened for his whetstone on the breeze.

But he had gone his way, the grass all mown,
And I must be, as he had been—alone,

'As all must be,' I said within my heart,
'Whether they work together or apart'.

But as I said it, swift there passed me by
On noiseless wing a bewildered butterfly,

Seeking with memories grown dim o'er night
Some rest ing flowers of yesterday's delight.

And once I marked his flight to round and round,
As where some flower lay withering on the ground.

And then he flew as far as eye could see,
And then on tremulous wing came back to me.

I thought of questions that have no reply,
And would have turned to toss the grass to dry ;

But he turned first, and led my eye to look
At a tall tuft of flowers beside a brook.

Aleaping tongue of bloom the scythe had spared
Beside a reedy brook the scythe had bared.

I left my place to know them by their name,
Finding them butterfly weed when I came.

The mower in the dew had loved them thus,
By leaving them to flourish, not for us,

Nor yet to draw one thought of ours to him,
But from sheer morning gladness at the brim.

The butterfly and I had lit upon,
Nevertheless, a message from dawn,

That made me hear the wakening birds around,
And hear his long scythe whispering to the ground,

And feel a spirit kindred to my own ;
So that henceforth I worked no more alone ;

But glad with him, I worked with his aid,
And weary, sought at noon with him the shade ;

An dreaming, as it were, held brotherly speech.
With one whose thought I had not hoped to reach

'Men work together,' I told him from the heart,
'Whether they work together or apart.'

MENDING WALLS

Robert Frost

Something there is that doesn't love a wall.
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun ;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.
The work of hunters is another thing :
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.

I let my neighbour know beyond the hill ;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.
We keep the wall between us we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance :
"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!'
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.
Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more :
There where it is we do not need the wall :
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, 'God fences make good neighbours.
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head :
"*Why* do they make good neighbours ? Isn't it
Where there are cows ? But here there are no cows.
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offense.
Something there is that dosen't love a wall,
That wants it down.' I could say 'Elves' to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top

In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, 'Good fences make good neighbours.'

He is a poet of nature. He describes nature in a different way. He belongs to wales. He is only describing his humble-self. He uses personification here.

WORDS

Fdward Thomas

Out of us all — all poets
That make rhymes, — write poetry
Will you choose
Sometimes—
As the winds use
A crack in a wall
Or a drain,
People Their joy or their pain
To whistle through—
Choose me,
You English words?

I know you :
You are light as dreams,
نازک۔ لطیف

Tough has oak,
Precious as gold,
As poppies and corn,
Or an old cloak:
Sweet as our birds
To the ear,
As the burnet rose
In the heat
Of Midsummer:
Strange as the races
Of dead and unborn:
Strange and sweet
Equally,
And familiar,
To the eye,
As the dearest faces
That a man knows,
And as lost homes are:
But though older far
Than oldest yew—
As our hills are, old—
Worn new
Again and again;
Young as our streams
After rain:
And as dear
As the earth which you prove
That we love.

Make me content
With some sweetness
From Wales

Whose nightingales
Have no wings—
From Wiltshire and Kent
And Herefordshire,
And the villages there—
From the names, and the things
No less.
Let me sometimes dance
With you,
Or climb
Or stand perchance
In ecstasy,
Fixed and free
In a rhyme,
As poets do.

LIGHTS OUT

Edward Thomas

I have come to the borders of sleep,
The unfathomable deep
Forest where all must lose
Their way, however straight,
Or winding, soon or late ;
They cannot choose.

Many a road and track
That, since the dawn's first crack,
Up to the forest brink,
Deceived the travellers,
Suddeny now blurs,
And in they sink.

Here love ends,
Despair, ambition ends,
All pleasure and all trouble,
Although most sweet or bitter,
Here ends in sleep that is sweeter
Then tasks most noble. اچھے، عزیز

There is not any book
Or face of dearest look
That I would not turn from now
To go into the unknown
I must enter and leave alone
I know not how.

tall trees of the forest
The tall forest towers ;
دھندلے Its cloudy foliage lowers چھا جانا leaves
Ahead, shelf abovc shelf ;
Its silence I hear and obey
That I may lose my way
And myself.

14/2/91

Foliage پتے
Sleep is a blessing for us.

THE GYPSY

Edward Thomas

A fortnight before Christmas Gypsies were every-
where :
Vans were drawn up on wastes, women trailed to
the fair.
"My gentleman," said one, "you've got a lucky face."
"And you've a luckier," I thought. "if such a grace
And impudence in rags are lucky." "Give a penny
For the poor baby's sake." "Indeed I have not any
Unless you can give change for a sovereign, my dear."
"Then just half a pipeful of tobacco can you spare ?"
I gave it. With that much victory she laughed content.
I should have given more, but off and away she went

With her baby and her pink sham flowers to rejoin
The rest before I could translate to its proper coin
Gratitude for her grace. And I paid nothing then,
As I pay nothing now with the dipping of my pen
For her brother's music when he drummed the tambourine
And stamped his feet, which made the workmen passing grin,
While his mouth-organ changed to a rascally Bacchanal dance
"Over the hills and far away." This and his glance
Outlasted all the the fair, farmer, and auctioneer,
Cheap-jack, balloon-man, drover with crooked stick, and steer,
Pig, turkey, goose, and duck, Christmas corpses to be.
Not even the kneeling ox had eyes like the Romany.
That night he peopled for me the hollow wooded land,
More dark and wild than stormiest heavens, that I searched and scanned
Like a ghost new-arrived. The gradations of the dark
Were like an underworld of death, but for the spark
In the Gypsy boy's black eyes as he played and stamped his tune,
"Over the hills and far away," and a cresent moon.

IN AUTUMN: AN ODE

Herbert E. Palmer

In Autumn the last fruits turn mellow,
And many flowers flaunt yellow,
And brown ánd russet-yellow are the hill-places
That the winds haunt.

And as dripping nights daunts the sun's lights
The famished leaves flutter yellow
Round the trees growing gaunt.

Autumn is a brown and yellow time
Soon after life's prime,
The time of a knell
Of everything man loved too well,—

When from some dim belfry of starshine
The gold and brassy bells of Change
Utter mournful ding-dongs
To the changing sing-songs
Crying, sighing where the grasses shone,
"It is all all over,
The leaping of life is over,
The cherry and the clover are gone."

Very strangely the music flows,
And the woof across the warp dims and glows,—
Brown and yellow with a glint of rose.
But the soul of man grieves;
And thick as whirled leaves,
While tired Time weaves
This third of his mysteries,
The birds crowd in the aching trees
And where late stood the corn-sheaves

How the birds twitter and complain !
How they complain to the creeping grey rain

And yet near the heart of the weeping there is
mirth;
For many days laugh with the joy of the Sun
And the hued brightness of Earth
That recks not Death's whiteness.

And bridal seem the stubble field-ways,
When crowned with a coronal of tinted weeds
And blackberry beads,
Decay pipes sweetly on her Pan-reeds;

Or dances full of amaze,
Heavy garlanded with the red berries
(Redder than the farm cherries)
From the hedge that the bright sun bleeds
And the Night slays
With her blanket of haze.

Then, though man scarce heeds.
Out of the West a finger beckons,
Westward beckons,—
Some strange allure
That throbs in the heart of all Change.

Very strange and pure are the days
When the bright sun through a silver haze
Steals slowly into a zenith of blue.
And you and I, I and you.
Stand as if on the brink of Spring
Listening,
Wondering.

For strange lovers walk softly in the field ways
As the sky falters and the wind sways.

And the ageing man turns a flushed face to the green girl,
Saying in a low tone that shudders to the wind's moan,
"'Look ! how lovely there were the tossed leaves whirl.
Is it not good that something is lost?"

And yet it is only Death that cometh
With his sickle of frost
And his diadem of snow-pearl.

APPEARANCE AND REALITY

Alfred Noyes

IN those great realms of light—
  From which our rounded skies, the wide, the deep,
Seem but a small dark cloud, a sphere of night
  Where embryonic lives are drowned in sleep—
They that were born through death
  To life at last, and have stripped off all dreams,
Draw with new joy their deep untroubled breath,
  Walk on firm ground, and swim in living streams.

We are the ghosts, not they;
  Ghosts with a cheating cloud-wrack round us furled.
Theirs is the substance; theirs the shining day;
  Theirs are the ringing highroads of the world;

Theirs the strong hills to range ;
  Valleys of Beauty ; bare scarred rocks of Truth ;
Theirs the full life that uses time and change
  To wing with music an eternal youth.

Theirs the great company, too,
  The century-peopled cities, the world's boast ;
Ours the dark dwellings ; ours an earth-bound few :
  Theirs is the central, universal host.
And when we too are born,
  And join that general concourse of mankind ;
When these blind gates burst open to that morn,
  And these blind eyes perceive that they were blind ;

When this dream-burial ends,
  And all the sensuous veils of colour and sound
That will not let us near our unseen friends
  From our true selves l.ke cere-cloths are unwound ;
In the first wonder and awe,
  When the dread seals are shattered and we see
Light beyond light, freedom at one with law,
  Thought, passion, will, one absolute harmony ;

O, what shall be our ciue,
  On our first waking, to that exquisite maze ?
One living truth that even on earth we knew
  In human form shall meet our wildered gaze ;
A voice ; a living hand ;
  The known transfiguring all that vast unknown ;
Then the full memory ; eyes that understand ;
  And the inarticulate love that claims its own,

THE EARTH CHILD

Gerald Gould

Out of the veins of the world comes the blood of me;
The heart that beats in my side is the heart of the sea;
The hills have known me of old, and they do not forget;
Long ago was I friends with the wind; I am friends with it yet.

The hills are grey, they are strange; they breed desire
Of a tune that the feet may march to and not tire;
For always up in the distance the thin roads wind,
And passing out of sight, they pass not out of mind.

I am glad when morning and evening alter the skies ;
There speaks no voice of the stars but my voice replies ;
When wave on wave all night cries out in its need,
I listen, I understand ; my heart takes heed.

Out of the red-brown earth, out of the grey-brown streams,
Came this perilous body, cage of perilous dreams ;
To the ends of all waters and lands they are tossed, they are whirled,
For my dreams are one with my body, yea, one with the world.

INTO BATTLE

Julian Grenfell

The naked earth is warm with Spring,
  And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
  And quivers in the sunny breeze ;

And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
  And a striving evermore for these ;
And he is dead who will not fight,
  And who dies fighting has increase

The fighting man shall from the sun
  Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth ;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
  And with the trees to newer birth ;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
  Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
  Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-star, and the Sisters Seven,
  Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
  They stand to him each one a friend ;
They gently speak in the windy weather ;
  They guide to valley and ridge's end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
  And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
  As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, "Brother, brother,
  If this be the last song you shall sing ;
Sing well, for you may not sing another ;
  Brother, sing."

In dreary, doubtful waiting hours,
  Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers ;
  O patient eyes, courageous hearts !

And when the burnfng moment breaks,
  And all things else are out of mind,
And only joy of Battle takes
  Him by the throat, and makes him blind,

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
  Not caring much to know, that still
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
  That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
  And in the ear Death moans and sings ;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
  And night shall fold him in soft wings.

NEW YEAR
1918

Rose Macaulay

Whatever the year brings, he brings nothing new,
For time, caught on the ancient wheel of change,
Spins round, and round, and round; and nothing is
strange
Or shall amaze
Mankind, in whom the heritage of all days
Stirs suddenly, as dreams half remembered do.
Whatever the year brings, he brings nothing new,

Pale, pale he stands,
Carrying world-old gifts in his cold hands—
Winds, and the sky's keen blue,
Woods, and the wild cuckoo,

Lovers, and loveliness, and death, and life.
Does he hold Peace, the derelict babe of strife
    And of wan penury ?
Will she ride in on the wash of the storming sea,
Be dropped at last by its ebb on the trampled sands,
    To lie there helplessly ?
    War's orphan, she,
And ungrown mother of wars yet to be,
She smiles and croons for a space between these two.
Whatever the year brings, he brings nothing new.

Dreams and desires and hopes does the year hold.
    Bad and good, tinsel and gold,
    Lying and true,
    One and all they are old, so old.
    They were dreamt and desired and told
By the first men swinging in trees by strong tails.
    Not till the last man fails,
    And the sun's fire pales,
Shall the embers of these flaming dreams be cold.
Whatever the year brings, he brings nothing new.

    Turn, turn the page !
It turns, and we, and the squirrel in his cage,
And the sun, and the moon, and the moon's salt tide ;
    And the earth turns too.
As flies on the rim of a wheel we ride
    From age round to age ;
And the dreams and the toys which make our pride
    Are an old heritage,

Worn properties from some primeval stage
        All curtained now from view...
Whatever the year brings, he brings nothing new.

        Go through the door.
You shall find nothing that has not been before,
Nothing so bitter it will not be once more.
All this our sad estate was known of yore,
        In old worlds red with pain,
Borne by hearts sullen and sick as ours, through
Desperate, forgotten, other winters, when
        Tears fell, and hopes, and men,
And crowns, and cities, and blood, on a trampled plain,
And nations, and honour, and God, and always rain...
And honour and hope and God rose up again,
        And like trees nations grew...
Whatever the year brings, he brings nothing new.

Should some year suddenly bring something new,
We should grope as lost children, without a clue.
We should drift all amazed through such a queer
        And unimagined year.
Riding uncharted seas, a derelict crew,
Whistling in vain for the old winds that blew
From the old skies, we should seek far and near
        Some mark by which to steer,
And some known port, that we might sail thereto.
        Black nightmare and blind fear
        Shall seize and hold him who
In some year suddenly finds something new.

———

FROM WINTER SUNRISE

Laurence Binnyon

It is early morning within this room ; without,
Dark and damp ; without and within, stillness
Waiting for day ; not a sound but a listening air.

Yellow jasmine, delicate on stiff branches
Stands in a Tuscan pot to delight the eye
In spare December's patient nakedness.

Suddenly, softy, as if a breath breathed
On the pale wall, a magical apparition,
The shadow of the jasmine, branch and blossom !

It was not there, it is there, in a perfect image ;
And all is changed. It is like a memory lost
Returning without a reason into the mind :

And it seems to me that the beauty of the shadow
Is more beautiful than the flower ; a strange beauty,
Pencilled and silently deepening to distinctness.

As a memory stealing out of the mind's slumber,
A memory floating up from a dark water,
Can be more beautiful than the thing remembered.

THE ALBUM

Day Leavis

I see you, child
In a garden sheltered for buds and playtime,
Listening as if beguiled
By a fancy beyond your years and the flowering may-
time,
The print is faded: soon there will be
No trace of that pose enthralling,
Nor visible echo of my voice distantly calling
"Wait! Wait for me!"

Then I turn the page
To a girl who stands like a questioning iris
By the waterside, at an age
That asks every mirror to tell what the heart's desire is.
The answer she finds in that oracle stream
Only time could affirm or disprove,
Yet I wish I was there to venture a warning, "Love
Is not what you dream."

Next you appear
As if garlands of wild felicity crowned you—
Courted, caressed, you wear
Like immortelles the lovers and friends around you.
"They will not last you, rain or shine,
They are but straws and shadows,"
I cry; "Give not to those charming desperadoes
What was made to be mine."

One picture is missing—
The last. It would show me a tree stripped bare
By intemperate gales, her amazing
Noonday of blossom spoilt which promised so fair.
Yet, scanning those scenes at your heyday taken,
I tremble, as one who must view
In the crystal a doom he could never deflect—yes, I
too
Am fruitlessly shaken.

I close the book;
But the past slides out of its leaves to haunt me
And it seems, wherever I look,
Phantoms of irreclaimable happiness taunt me.
Then I see her, petalled in new-blown hours,
Beside me—"All you love most there
Has blossomed again," she murmurs, "all that you missed there
Has grown to be yours."

AS I WALKED OUT ONE EVENING

Wynstan Hugh Auden

As I walked out one evening,
  Walking down Bristol Street,
The crowds upon the pavement
  Were fields of harvest wheat.

And down by the brimming river
  I heard a lover sing
Under an arch of the railway :
  "Love has no ending.

"I'll love you, dear, I'll love you
Till China and Africa meet,
And the river jumps over the mountain
And the salmon sing in the street,

"I'll love till the ocean
Is folded and hung up to dry
And the seven stars go squawking
Like geese about the sky.

The years shall run like rabbits,
For in my arms I hold
The Flower of the Ages,
And the first love of the world."

But all the clocks in the city
Began to whirr and chime :
"O let not Time deceive you,
You cannot conquer Time.

"In the burrows of the Nightmare
Where Justice naked is,
Time watches from the shadow
And coughs when you would kiss.

"In headaches and in worry
Vaguely life leaks away,
And Time will have his fancy
Tomorrow or today.

"Into many a green valley
Drifts the appalling snow :
Time breaks the threaded dances
And the diver's brilliant bow.

"O plunge your hands in water,
Plunge them in up to the wrist ;
Stare, stare in the basin
And wonder what you've missed.

"The glacier knocks in the cupboard,
The desert sighs in the bed,
And the crack in the teacup opens
A lane to the land of the dead.

"O look, look in the mirror,
O look in your distress ;
Life remains a blessing
Although you cannot bless.

"O stand, stand at the window
As the tears scald and start ;
You shall love your crooked neighbour
With your crooked heart."

It was late, late in the evening,
The lovers they were gone ;
The clocks had ceased their chiming,
And the deep river ran on.

THE UNKNOWN CITIZEN

Wynstan Hugh Auden

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be
One against whom there was no official complaint,
And all the reports on his conduct agree
That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,
For in everything he did he served the Greater Community.
Except for the War till the day he retired
He worked in a factory and never got fired.
But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.
Yet he wasn't a scab or odd in his views,
For his Union reports that he paid his dues,
(Our report on his Union shows it was sound)

And our Social Psychology workers found
That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.
The Press are convinced that he bought a paper every day
And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.
Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,
And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.
Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare
He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Instalment Plan.
And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,
A gramophone, a radio, a car and a frigidaire,
Our researchers into Public Opinion are content
That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;
When there was peace, he was for peace; when there was war, he went.
He was married and added five children to the population,
Which our Eugenist says was right number for a parent of his generation,
And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education,
Was he free ? was he happy ? The question is absurd :
Had anything been wrong, we should certainlyhave heard.

JUNE THUNDER

Louis Macneice

The Junes were free and full, driving through tiny
Roads, the mudguards brushing the cow-parsely,
Through fields of mustard and under boldly embattled
Mays and chestnuts

Or between beeches verdurous and voluptuous
Or where broom and gorse beflagged the chalkland—
All the flare and gusto of the unenduring
Joys of a season

Now returned but I note as more appropriate
To the maturer mood impending thunder
With an indigo sky and the garden hushed except for
The treetops moving.

Then the curtains in my room blow suddenly inward,
The shrubbery rustles, birds fly heavily homeward,
The white flowers fade to nothing on the trees and rain comes
Down like a dropscene.

Now there comes the catharsis, the cleansing downpour
Breaking the blossoms of our overdated fancies,
Our old sentimentality and whimsicality,
Loves of the morning.

Blackness at half-past eight, the night's precursor,
Clouds like falling masonry and lightning's lavish
Annunciation, the sword of the mad archangel
Flashed from the scabbard.

If only you would come and dare the crystal
Rampart of rain and the bottomless moat of thunder,
If only now you would come I should be happy
Now if now only.

THE SEA BIRD

Keith Douglas

Walking along beside the beach
where the Mediterranean turns in sleep
under the cliff's demiarch

through a curtain of thought I see
a dead bird and a live bird
the dead eyeless, but with a bright eye

the live bird discovered me
and stepped from a black rock into the air—
I turn from the dead bird to watch him fly,

electric, brilliant blue,
beneath he is orange, like flame,
colours I can't believe are so,

as legendary flowers bloom
incendiary in tint, so swift he
searches about the sky for room,

towering like the cliffs of this coast
with his stiletto wing
and orange on his breast :

he has consumed and drained
the colours of the sea
and the yellow of this tidal ground

till he escapes the eye, or is a ghost
and in a moment has come down
crept into the dead bird, ceased to exist.

Notes

Thomas Hardy

THE CHILDREN AND SIR NAMELESS

Sir Nameless as a character is an example of the arrid loneliness that surrounds a man who cuts himself off from life. His life is futile because he rejects the young, the growing and the green in nature. Hardy seems to be telling us that every man is a part of this creation, and can only survive in men's memories and his life be meaningful if he lives linked to the creative sap running through creation.

The children symbolize life's renewal, and it is these children that Sir Nameless in his arrogant pride spurned. He foolishly hoped to be remembered by a stone statue after his death. The cold stone, meant nothing to anyone, because he, Sir Nameless had not participated in living. This monument of pride was ultimately kicked out of shape and the carved name obliterated by the energetic young feet of the children he hated.

Hardy has sharply contrasted the flexibility of life with the rigidity of death in this poem. The children for example "romp" in the part whereas Sir Nameless remained indoors, they kick and are restless in Church sitting over the stone image of Sir Nameless. They are associated with the green herbage of the park and Sir Nameless with a stone statue inflexibly girt by the accoutrements of war "with shield and crest, and casque and sword complete."

Questions :

1. Why is Sir Nameless so called ?
2. Why did Sir Nameless object to the children playing in his park ?

———

THE SURVIEW

The word "surview" signifies the over-all view or summing up Hardy makes of his life.

As it happens sometimes when we are alone and gazing into a fire, the mind and body relaxed, un-assailed by the distractions of the day, we drop into a contemplative mood. The purity of the fire makes

us face ourselves, the kind of life we have led, what done and what left undone. The flames licking the green veins in the sticks symbolize time burnng away youth and opportunity. The moment of reckoning is at hand. The poet resolutely admits to all that he should have done which he has evaded doing. The mood is of a sad regret that we all experience during the course of our lives, especially when the confidence of youth begins to wave. Youth usually quiets its conscience with the thought "There is plenty of time"—age comes, when we admit that time has slipped away.

The brightness of the fire can be interpreted as young surging life, that eats away time and opportunity. It can also be taken to signify the conscience. Every one's conscience flares up sometimes, and we are assailed with remorse, but after a while the glow is quenched, and we return to the comfortable dark of a smudged out past.

Questions :

1. What sins does the poet admit to having committed ?
2. Which is the quality that could have prevented any of these sins ?

NO BUYERS

A STREET SCENE

Two striking impressions are created by this poem. Firstly it conveys a sense of a loneliness that is sad yet contented and self contained. The man the pony and the woman appear walking down a deserted street in the rain The three of them are one sad unit. The man sings a dirge like tune, the little entourage moves slower than a funeral procession, the pony is an old friend and the woman is at ease in this accustomed sadness. She picks up the dirge like tune her man chants, as and when he feels like it There is between the man, the woman and the pony an understanding of a long association, this is what makes time self-contained. This deep unity emerges in the perfect alignment between the movements of the three. Further since there are no buyers to clutter the clarity of the figures, and check the onward ambling of the cart, the simple coordination between them appears all the more evident. The pony "Mirrors his master in every item of pace and pose", and "The woman walks on the pavement verge.

Parallel to the man"

as they move in innocent harmony

"Step by step."

There is even an alignment between the cart and the pony

Which wriggles left and right in a rambling line
And puhing the pony with it in each incline.

In his novels Hardy reveals himself a master in the art of creating stark clear cut images of men and women. He has produced the same effect in this short but powerfully affecting poem.

Turk's head brush : A brush shaped like a Turkish turban.

Drum Major's way : In the manner of a sergeat in command of regimental drummers.

Question :

1. Contrast the loneliness of *Sir Nameless* with that of the characters in *No Buyers*.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

SPRING AND DEATH

In this poem Hopkins describes the experience of Spring and Death both being encountered simultaneously. The strange meeting takes place in a dream,

so that the atmosphere suggests the supernatural. Death suddenly stands out as a black coffin in the vivid green of spring; and as a skeleton with black ribs like the iron bars of a dungeon, where men are left to linger and die. In his dream the poet is made eerily aware of the presence of death in the midst of spring, an awareness usually denied in a waking state. The hidden fear men have of autumn and winter as agents of the close of life (especially in cold northern countries) occurs sharply in sleep.

Death in spring went about marking tree and flower to be his in the autumn. Those he marked and those he left all passed away at the close of the year. But some there were for whom the poet felt a special regret. They were the exceptional, the beautiful and the rare people. That they should also undergo Death's general annhilation saddened the poet profoundly.

What is especially worth nothing is the way in which Hopkins introduces the element of the macabre and the evil, into a bright green spring day. The evanescence of spring is heightened and we cherish it all the more because it is the certain victim of Death. Both death and Spring are twined into one another in the lush foliage of the mysterious "stilly wood", with "A little sickness in the air from too much fragrance everywhere".

Charnel - house grate ribs — the iron bars of a prisoners vault are likened to the ribs of a skeleton. Such a vault or dungeon is usually associated with prisoners left to langu sh till they die, and turn to skeletons.

Questions :

1. Why is the poet full of regret for some trees and flowers that will perish with the autumn ?
2. What is the connection between Spring and Death ? How far does the poet accept it. ?

GOD'S GRANDEUR

A poem that evokes dramatic contrasts beween light and dark, the dirty and sodden and the clean and pure. Images like "shining from shook foil" and "like the ooze of oil

Crushed......"

Create a concentrated and powerful impression of effulgent light. A light that is unearthly and both brilliant and warm. The poet is at a loss to understand why men are not naturally awed and over-come by this manifest omnipotence of God.

"...Why do men now not reck his rod?"

The repeated, day after day sordidness of the average man's life is as strongly emphasized as the shining of God. A battle seems to be on in which Good and Evil are powerfully locked through the long hours of darknes-and then lo ! the light breaks in the east. The warmth of God's love symbolized by over-arching protective wings bright with light, enfold men unto themselves.

Shook foil. In a letter to Robert Bridges (Jan. 4, 1881) Hopkins says .." I mean foil in its sense of leaf or tinsel, and no other word will give the effect I want. Shaken gold foil gives off broad glares like sheet lightening and also, this is true of nothing else, owing to its zigzag dints and crossings and net-work of small many-coloured facets a sort of fork lightening too".

dose of oil. The bright golden light emanting from the oil of crushed olives,

Nor can foot feel, being shod. The line suggests the artificiality of civilized – life, that evades its own soiled reality.

Question :

1. Bring out the contrast between the bright glory of God and the soiled world of men in your own words.

DAISY

In this most tender and delicate poem of love ? Daisy is the name both of a girl and an flower known for its purity and innocence. The poem is the expression of a fleeting moment of love all the more poignant because the young girl was quite unaware of the emotion she had kindled in the poet's heart.

The images and the landscape suggest open spaces the sea, the shore and the fair blue skies above. The atmosphere is rarefied and lightsome, in keeping with the girl's innocence. The girl is associated with the indefineable and ethereal.

"And with the sea-breeze hand in hand,

Came innocencc and she"

or we are made of the transparency of her skin

"Her skin was like a grape whose veins
Run show instead of wine".

Her language is innocent of innuendo and her ways unself-conscious, free of any traces of simulated modesty. She is as clear and forthright as the sea-breeze that seams to have brought her landward.

"She knew not those sweet words she spake,
Nor knew her own sweet way"

What she gives the poet is the essence of the innocent and the natural.

"A look, a word of her winsome mouth

And a wild raspberry"

These are as fleeting as the sea-breezes, as swift to leave no trace as sand through the fingers.

Daisy is both young girl, and innocent child, clear fresh and unworldly she stands

Artless as the air

And candid as the skies"

Utterly unconscious of the affect she has on the poet.

The love she arouses is pure and clear, the poet does not reveal it to her, he revels in the utter insousiance of Daisy's sky-like being. Her carefree joyousness stabs him to the heart, he loves her but she is remote from loving him.

This makes him realize how inextricably pain and joy are intertwined, and is tellingly expressed where the tender beauty of Daisy is seen surrounded by the spikes of the gorse she stands in,

Breast deep' 'mid flower and spine"

His sadness is sweet with the joy of Daisy. The experiences of meeting Daisy leads to a universal conclusion. Life begins with the pain of the travailing woman, and it closes with the pain of death, so the poet's love began and ended on a note as exquisite as the purity of Daisy,

gorse — a plant with spikes.

spine — thorns, spikes of the gorse.

Questions :

1. Why do you think the poet's love was not reciprocated ;
2. Give examples from the text showing this poem to be about
   a) innocence b) pain.

Charles G. D. Roberts

ON THE ROAD

The poem is in the form of a parable. The road is life, the mountains to be climbed, its difficulties. The further and further mountain ranges revealed with the conquest of each peak signify enhanced understanding and an ever-growing vision about what life has to offer. The humble inn at the end is quiet, common death. But so powerful is the poet's passion to forge into new modes of being that we along with him are utterly convinced that after death the hill tops revealed will be even more resplendent with the light of the morning. In other words ever new worlds to be absorbed and conquered are man's destiny, here and in the hereafter.

The way farer the poet meets is in sharp contrast.

to his vigorously spiritual character. For him the hills are dead mounds of mud. The country appears rough the inn mean because his own soul is drab and small. It is the imagination and spiritual calibre of a man that decides what life is like—a vivid adventure with increasily glorious experiences or a stale flat sojourn with neither heights nor light. To the seeker is it left to find "The largesse of 'time". Both faith and effort make life a worthwhile experience.

the largesse of time — the liberality, the abundance of what one learns with the passage of time.

Questions ;

1. Contrast the poet with the wayfarer.
2. What would you personally compare life's landscape to ?

William Butler Yeats

THE WHITE BIRDS

Exhausted by the intensity symbolized by "the flame of the meteor" and "the blue star of twilight" Yeats yearns for the wandering freedom of two white

birds for himself and his beloved adrift on unknown seas. He is also aweary of dreaming of the ideal and the beautiful, symbolized by the lily and the rose.

The white birds duplicate the white foam of the seas and the seas turn our imagination to "the distant far off things", and the seas of "fairylands forlorn" that poets have dreamt of. The two white birds are to sail the seas of imaginative experience and this time the poetry will be free of the usual Yeatsian poetic associations of meteor, star, lily and rose. It is to be a new experience, but one he knows fraught with social ostracism and loneliness.

Danae wandered in a little boat touching strange unknown island shores. Her forlorn voyage reinforces the impression of the desolation that will surround the white birds. They too will touch distant strands, they too will like Danae wander for long years, absorbing freedom and sadness. For Yeats the time of homage to the accepted symbols of poetry is over, and another stage of poetic growth begins. For this the price of loneliness has to be paid, for following on "new untrodden ways" The freedom to be embraced condemns the souls of the lover and the beloved to a life of aliens in a comfortless world. In associating himself and his beloved with the wanderings of an especially chosen person like Danae, in touehing distant islands and shores, the poet admits that they are select creatures, remote from the mass of mankind. Their pursuit of truth

and freedom sets them apart from the drab familiar social world.

Danaan shores : Reference to the Greek myth about the young woman Danae. She was imprisoned by her father in a brazen tower, because a prophecy foretold that she would kill him. Zeus, the king of the gods visited her there as a shower of gold. She thus conceived her son Perseus, and was set adrift in a boat on the seas, to fend for herself. "Danaan shores" would therefore mean the strange, distant shores that Danae's wandering boat took her to.

Questions :

1. Why does the poet wish himself and his beioved to become two White Birds ?
2. What is the poet going to give up in becoming a White Bird ?
3. How is the wandering of the White Birds different from the journey described in the erarlie poem *On the Road ?*

William Butler Yeats

THE WILD SWANS AT COOLE

This is a poem about Time, Mortality and Immortality. The first verse ushers in the death of the year ; but the dry autumn season is resplendent with the white swans, a symbol of continuity and immortality.

In the second verse the passage of time is marked, nineteen autumns have come and gone since the poet first came to Coole Park and watched the swans. To this element of time are juxtaposed the "great broken rings", signifying the eternity of the swans mounted in the air. The swans are clamorous, they move, they are of this world, yet they are unearthly and of the sky too.

The third verse accentuates the passage of the years. Many changes have overtaken the poet since he first witnessed the beauty of the swans. In the fourth verse we are told how the swans continue unchanged or "unwearied". They are immortal in the sense that Keats' Nightingale was immortal.

Generations of nightingales and swans come and go but each bird continues to bear the badge of beauty and be the emblem of immortality. Yeats' swans belong both to the water and the air. They are of the earth and the heavens. In the fourth verse,

They paddle in the cold

They do not suffer, they do not change, even though each individual bird dies, it is reproduced again in the old perfection. Man however is not certain of his destiny. In the fifth verse the poet puts a strange question to himself. Where will these immortal swans be when he awakes "some day" into immortality after death ? They may well have flown away to make eternity on some other earthly "lakes edge or pool", for if they are eternity on earth can they be in eternity too ?

The poem is an enigma, questioning and pondering over the mysterious confluence of Time and Immortality through the "nine and fifty swans".

Coole Park : The estate of Lady Augusta Gregory in Ireland which Yeats first visited in 1897. He wrote this poem in 1916. Yeats has therefore been coming to Coole Park for nineteen Years.

Questions :

1. Briefly explain what you think the Swans symbolize.
2. What question in verse 5 is the poet asking ?
3. What common and disparate features do you discern between the White Birds in the poem above and the White Swans ?

WHEN YOU ARE OLD

This poem is one of the many poems Yeats wrote in his life time to his beloved Maud Gonne. Yeats' love was unrequited and Maud Gonne became a symbol of the main ideals and ecstacies of the poet.

Yeats' meaning is elusive, his poetry suggests and creates an atmosphere and seldom descends to concrete formulations or answers the questions it poses.

The first verse imagines Maud Gonne as old, Yeat's sees her musing over her great and celebrated beauty in a book of his poems. That beauty is now vanished.

The second verse creates the point of the poem. Maud's physical beauty was loved by many but even then when her face and body were glorious with youth, it was her travalling soul the poet worshipped.

In the last verse Yeats describes in beautiful evocative imagery how his love being rejected he escaped into the world of misty idealism hiding his face "amid a crown of stars". Even the escape is a complement to Maud only the stars were a fit surrogate for her.

Questions :

1. What does Yeats mean by "pilgrim soul ?"
2. What is the difference between Yeats' love and the other men's love for the beloved ?

Charlotte Mew

THE CALL

This is a poem about the awakening of the soul and spiritual commitment to an ideal that goes beyond one's lazy comforts. The experience comes to many human beings especially the young and the old, when they somewhat unaccountably find themselves dissatisfied with the daily round of their uninspired lives. The whole being cries out to embrace a cause higher than the self. We can interpret its many manifestations as love of God and love of Man.

The "quiet red or burned out fire" smothered in ashes in the opening of the poem is the neglected slothful soul. Then quite unexpectedly one day—as is usually happens in such cases—there was an imperious call made by this roused soul;

"A rattle on the window pane.
A voice on the sharp air."

An invisible angel seemed to sweep in, bright or dark, good or awesome in his majesty, cannot be told for certain. Its visitation broke up the frost of the poetesse's sensibilities. The door of the soul being opened to the other-world can never shut again, signifying that the supreme Power, beyond ourselves, once being experienced can never again be denied. Now we are forever committed to the highest. No matter how painful this service may be, no matter

"what marks we shall leave upon the snow", or whether we shall achieve success or not.

What is remarkable about the poem is the very subtle and sensitive way in which it has *suggested* a spiritual experience. The soul and God have not been mentioned as such, only evoked. By doing this Charlotte Mew, has made the poem represent a variety of spiritual awakenings of different types of people.

Questions :-

1. Why is the poem called *The Call* ?
2. Why will the opened door not shut again ? and why is there no more sitting in the same place ?
3. Who do you think the visitor is in the poem? Why has his identity been left vague ?

William Henry Davies

AN EPITAPH

The poem is written in memory of one who has died. It sums up the deceased's qualities and at the same time condemns his enemies. The exceptional goodness of the dead man, served ironically enough to bring out by contrast the great evil in others. Service of mankind was the dead man's purpose in life. In serving so many he naturally could not serve all successfully. They promptly turned against him, revealing their petty mean natures. If he failed it was because he was human, and also because those he sought to help were frail creatures—full of their own weaknesses, that let them down. The world he found was peopled by the unloving, but he was unique, he blamed himself, not them—for failing in love. He was exploited by the base because he was innocent and straight, and in this way his goodness ironically encouraged evil-doing. There is justice still however. The evil are punished with hell.

Questions :

1. Describe the various types of people mentioned in this poem.
2. The poem is called an Epitaph because it is written to commemorate the virtues of a dead man. What else does it do apart from this ?

Walter de la Mare

TO A CANDLE

A finely sensitive poem about a loved person asleep. De la Mare describes his exquisite thoughts and feelings as he, candle in hand, looks upon the beautiful innocent face upon the pillow. The room is plunged in its own "small" darkness, and the light of the candle makes a patch of day. The lovely creature asleep is likened to a flower shut close for the night, remote from the noise and grime of the day time world. The golden brown hair floats unbound on the pillow, the expression on the face one of utter serenity. With a stab of fear the poet thinks she may be dead. He bends closer, the candle-light makes her lashes flicker, her mouth would speak her dreams but cannot. The skin is smooth, but underneath pulsate fine blue veins of blood. She looks as one dead, but is alive. This conjunction of death and sleep is what fascinates the poet.

Thoughts shift into another key in stanza 5. The dear creature asleep is a perfect image of the child that she once was. It is the wise beatific face of an angel—and she seems to plead that she is love's child, made to be loved—that she is only her simple self. The self so well known by the poet.

Finally De la Mare comes to the conclusion of this experience. The loved being, his wife no doubt, made home of a homeless place by her heavenly presence. It is not for him to either rejoice or pine herein. It is not for him to tell the loved one to go away. God made her as he made the rose to be joyed in. The sleeper stirs, the hand moves, the poet's musing provoked by the candle light comes to an end, and he moves away.

The impact of this poem is strongly pictorial. De la Mare's visual sensibilities have been aroused by the glow of light created by a candle in a darkened room. In the midst of the surrounding gloom a seraphic yet human creature is revealed, of this world, yet not of it, for she is wrapped in sleep, death's counterfeit.

Questions :

1. What are the thoughts and feelings of the poet, when he looks upon the loved one asleep ?

———

THE LISTENERS

The key to De la Mare's poetry lies in his words. It is "the endeavour, faithfully and well... To enshrine (in language) the enexpressible .." *The Listeners* is one of his most elusive of poems, to be intuitively felt, and not to be comprehended through fact and reason. Its magic power lies in the creation of an eerie stillness, silent felt presences, but tantalizingly invisible. The poem is about the effect of an utterly silent house ostensibly on a Traveller, actually upon the reader. The Traveller shouts and calls and knocks on the door, nobody answers, and even he is touched by the supernatual. For one thing we are told nothing about him except that he is a Traveller. A .Traveller on horseback at night is a creature of mystery. We do not know from where he comes and what his destination is. His appearance is left vague, the grey eyes are the only clearly mentioned characteristic. Blue, brown or black eyes are of definite colours. Grey is an indefinite colour, suggesting the strange. The Traveller is a horseman, not an ordinary pedestrian, which adds romance to his moonlit figure. He provokes questions. Who is he? Why has he come at night? What has he got to do with the people in the mysterious house? The moonlight has an important role. It is a silent witness, to what is happening, it is an ally of the ghostly listeners and party to their secret. It transforms the whole scene to a state of unearthliness.

The all pervasive, throbbing silence is created by contrasting sound effects. There is the lonely voice of the Traveller calling "Is anybody there?" there is the crisp knock on the door, then again even a louder call and finally the suggestive sentence.

"Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word."

What promise had he made.? The answer to this question like other questions aroused by the poem we shall never know.

Every startling sound is recorded, because all around is wrapped in an ominous and trembling stillness.

Ay they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on the stone."

The silence is given a ghostly character by envisaging hosts of phantom, speechless listeners indoors. They are alert, are awake, and listen. They create silence. Such creatures are sometimes in one's imagination when we knock at the door of a closed house. Their presence is dramatically supernatural just because they cannot be seen or heard.

De la Mare's achievement lies in creating a whole poem out of sheer atmosphere. No concrete events are allowed to intrude into this moonlit world. There are only unseen ghosts, imperceptibly felt, a strange horseman and a shuttered house. Such

material belongs to paranormal reality a reality we are all dimly aware of, which is provoked into dominance by this poem.

Questions :

1. How does the poet create a supernatural atmosphere ?
2. Who do you think is more important, the Listeners or the Horseman ?

Robert Frost

A TUFT OF FLOWERS

Frost is a poet of tender musing thoughts into which are combined the most delicate emotions.

The poem expresses the experience of loneliness and division, and then sudden exultant joy at unity discovered. Early one morning the poet goes out to turn the grass to dry, which has been cut at dawn by someone else. Although it has been freshly mown there is strangely enough no sign of the man who did the work. Now it is the poet's turn to work at the grass, alone, like the man who had earlier cut it. This brings home to him the thought of men's

separation from each other. Even working at a comm task, they find themselves going about their business alone. This sense of division is painful to Frost—Work instead of uniting disunites.

Then a third character enters, a lovely flitting butterfly. He is nature's creature and like the poet senses loss

"Seeking with memories grown dim o'er night
Some resting flower of yesterday's delight".

He flits nostalgically over the place where yesterdays "flower lay withering on the ground".

The poet's eye follows the flight of the butterfly and alights on "a tall tuft of flowers, beside a brook". All around the scythe has been at work, but these, the early morning mower left untouched. The loneliness, the sense of loss dissolves of a sudden. Frost had hankered after communication between the mower and himself, and he finds the standing tuft of flowers, celebrate and uphold men's common love of beauty.

So the poet, the mower and no less the butterfly are all linked in their common homage to nature's beauty. Frost has to reverse his earlier opinion that all men are alone, "Whether they work together or apart."

to "Men work together......
Whether they work together or apart".

The spared tuft of flowers is a symbol of a shared value in work. Both men cut and turned the grass in isolation, although it was a common job, it was done by two men separately, but even in their separation they both loved and responded to the "leaping tongue of bloom".

The experience of loneliness in this poem seems to reflect on modern industr'al civilization. The cutting of the grass is subjected to division of labour, consequently the two men are, as in factories, alienated from each other. Each is busy with his own specialized job. But whereas these men can never find a common point of commun:on those whose work is in natural surroundings suddenly come upon a point of beauty that they share and reverence in common. The addition of the butterfly to the scene of the poem reinforces, a sense of union between man and nature. The flowers by themselves perhaps would not have represented nature as livingly as the butterfly. Further the flitting movements of the butterfiy suggest the gladsome leaping of the poet's and the mowers' hearts both on suddenly seeing the tuft of flowers.

Questions :

1. Why does the poet look for the mower ?
2. Why is the tufi of flowers important ?
3. Comment on the role of the butterfly in the poem.

MENDING WALLS

A wall is a symbol of division of "keeping myself to myself". There are two kinds of walls in this poem, the actual visible wall, and the wall of alienation that grows up between men, of which the concrete wall is a symbol. Men keep mending walls, cementing the division between themselves, but walls both inner and outer have a way of crumbling down. The conventional view is that "good fences make good neighbours" *i.e.* : men get on better if each stays on his own property and does not encroach on his neighbour's land. This, Frost feels does not really lead to a brotherly relationship. A wall is an unnatural barrier, it therefore keeps breaking. Chinks and holes are ever appearing suggesting men's need of each other, of love and communication. When the two neighbours set about piling the stones one upon the other they will not hold in place, again because a wall is unnatural or inhuman.

Men build walls automatically without thinking what they are gaining and what casting out by so doing.

"Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out".

One may wall in material security, but one walls out good neighbourliness ; and one may literally be walling oneself up like a prisoner. Good fences do *not* make good neighbours, they make for hostility.

Frost asks a straight question about walls, "Why do they make good neighbours ?" and next Who actually would be offended if he wants to know just exactly what a wall holds in and what it excludes ? The answer he says can be that a wall holds one safe from elves ; which is just being facetious, to hide the troubling truth. He wants that the neighbour should answer himself, and openly admit that what a wall holds out is love.

At the end of the poem the loveless neighbour appears like a subhuman primitive creature, a boulder in each hand, submerged in the darkness of his brutal heart. Stupidly, insensitively he repeats "Good fences make good neighbours", when actually the opposite is true.

Elves, plural of elf. An elf is a diminutive supernatural creature, whether malevolent or otherwise, that is supposed to haunt woods and caves.

Questions :

1. What sentiment do you find in common between *A Tuft of Flowers* and *Mending Walls* ?
2. What kinds of walls are described in the poem ?
3. Why do not good fences make good neighbours ?

WORDS

The poem is a sensitive invocation to English words to inspire Edward Thomas a Welshman to write English poetry.

Inspiration has been likened to a breeze or a wind that blows from the heavens and touches the poet. Thomas' use of the wind is private and personal. The poetry he wants to write ought to be inspired by homely experience—both of pleasure and pain. Thus he would like his poems to evoke the kind of joy and pain that we are reminded of when hearing the wind blow through a cracked wall or a drain. Such a wind is not grand and sonorous, its volume is limited, but its impact is piercing. It truly aligns itself with the ordinary man's experience of pleasure and pain. To mould poetic inspiration to the daily yet poignant is no less a feat than writing of high heroic sentiments.

While pleading for words to help him, Thomas proves himself a master of image and phrase. The long list of images describing the significance of words are a feast of the fundamental and the ethereal, the beautiful and the suggestive. Thomas uses contraries to fill out the mysterious power of words. They can re-create the insubstantial dream and the substantial

wide boled oak, the cultivated polish of gold as well as the natural glow of poppies and corn. Words can conjure up the soft familiarity of a wellworn garment. They can sound as sweet as the notes of a bird and repeat the beauty of a simple wild rose. Words too are evocative of the mystery of the hidden in the past, and in the future, and yet as comforting as dear well known faces and the homes of our infancy. Words span civilized time, they belonged to, and were used by generations of men in the past and they are still used old as they are to express the newness of experience in the present. The very regenerative heart of nature is in words. Like rain streams and hills, they have their source in the beginning of time but like these they endure fresh and permanent. In other words they are eternal, and all of time, past, present and the future can by in the grip of the poet if he have power over words.

Being Welsh by birth and the Welsh language known for its sweetness and music, Thomas wishes to find some content in his native words too. The nightingales of Wales "have no wings" meaning that the Welsh tongue is insular and peculiar to Wales alone. The nightengales being associated in Europe with poetry. It cannot be merged into English, so while he recognizes the difference between Welsh and English, he would be true to Welsh too. The English dialects of Wiltshire, Kent and Herefordshire are

sweet and various, these too he wishes to be content with and on easy and friendly terms. He must absorb the very texture and grain of the names and words used in these parts of England.

Words must flow their musical rapture into his being so that his poetry evokes the dance ; they must make his spirit soar and mount glorious heights. The form and movement of rhyme must give to him both foot hold and freedom. His poetry must therefore, be deeply planted in nature while swaying to the ecstacy of the spirit.

The poet recreates life through words. The words are all there, through time immorial for the asking, but it is only some men who can unlock the mystery, the passion and the beauty that underlies human experience. We should note that although the poem is a supplication to words to "choose", Thomas, to write English verse, from one point of view it is not the words that are of paramount importance but the experience of pleasure and pain that they are handmaidens to.

Nevertheless only a poet with his heightened sensibilities can make them minister to the human condition. Although this poem is a plea to English words to enable him to write poetry, this appeal itself is couched as fine poetry revealing a mastery of the English words. Thomas is already at ease with the language, and if as said above his sensibility has

been able to make words minister to his poetry, it is these words that have in their turn helped form this sensibility. The relationship therefore between the poet and words is reciprocal.

Question :

1. What characteristics does the poet ascribe to Words ?

LIGHTS OUT

A poem that views sleep from a very interesting angle. Sleep has paramount power over all man's passionate interests and activities, his joys and sorrows. No one can withstand its lure. All day, from early dawn men peruse the promise of this route or that, of one means or another to achieve their goals, but at nightfall they willy-nilly relinquish the conscious hold upon life. They find themselves suddenly submerged by the oblivion of sleep.

The dominance of sleep equalizes all men, both those who tread the straight and those the crooked path of life.

After reading the poem a sense of gratitude is aroused for the blessing of sleep. Nothing less

imperious, less insiduously tempting than it, could keep men away from their obsessive, ideals and anxieties.

Questions :

1. Give examples of men's day time concerns in the poem ?
2. Quote the lines that describe the coming on of sleep.

THE GYPSY

The experience of two distinct worlds and their values forms the subject of this poem. Gypsies are all over the world known to be a gay, free, rascally race, living like nomads, yet nibbling at the outskirts of society. Moving from one place to another they cheat, thieve, dance and sing their way through life. Proud and not a little contemptuous of the well ordered prudent citizen, who spends his life saving up for the rainy day. The gypsy has fascinated writers of novels and poetry, becoming a symbol of an unhibited joy in life. The gypsies cunning is charming because if the gypsy cheats the conventional man or woman he does it not because he is materia-

listic, but just to live fully in the moment. They live therefore intensely enjoying themselves as we who are always bothered for the morrow never can.

The again, another gypsy, brother to the young

In this poem the poet has been struck by the quality of grace that emerges from a gypsy man and woman. The word "grace" has a host of meanings and associations. For Thomas the word implies the gypsies beauty of body and their freedom and joy of life.

Christmas celebrations are at hand, the gypsies have come in their horse drawn vans to take part in a fair to be held outside the town. They are especially well known as fortune-tellers and no fair is complete without its gypsy fortune tellers tent. Gypsies generally are associated with supernatural sight and they trade upon this reputation to extort money from the credible. A young gypsy woman hoping to squeeze out some money for her baby flatters the poet by telling him he has a lucky face. He is at once struck by the saucy air of this creature in rags. Just a little tobacco contents her, instead of money. Gypsies are in some ways simple, nature's children pleased with very little. The young woman's frank straightforward pleasure brought such a feeling of gratitude welling up into the poet's heart that he concludes that what she gave him for a pinch of tobacco was priceless. It could not be measured

in terms of coins. The gypsy is a strange creature, a beggar and yet the most non-materialistic of human beings.

The again, another gypsy, brother to the young woman gave so much to the poet that could never be valued in terms of money. Brimfull of the joy of life he drummed on a tambourine, and stamped his feet in time, making ordinary working men grin with sudden joy. Next he switches over to a simple mouth organ and draws from it the music of revelry and merry making—the tune "Over the Hills and Far Away"—suggesting utter freedom from the cares of life. Gifts such as these can never be paid for, for they gave to the poet a new lease of life.

At night when he closes his eyes nothing of the fair lives in his mind's eye, the sellers of various commodities, the cattle, the birds for Christmas feasting are all obliterated. The dark magic in the eyes of the gypsy boy haunts the poet. A strange, unknown world of storm and dark woods opens up, kindred to the gypsies soul. This is unfamiliar ground, it is as dark as the land of death, but no, it vibrates with the live music of "Over the Hills" and is magical with a crescent moon. Warm gypsy blood and tantalizing gypsy music has conquered the world of daily reality for the time being.

Questions :

1. Express in your own words what the poet received from the young woman gypsy and her brother? Why could it not be paid for ?
2. In what ways are gypsies different from other people ?

Herbert E. Palmer

IN AUTUMN: AN ODE

This poem is written in honour of Autumn. For the poet it is a strange ambivalent season, crossed by signs of both life and death. Its complexity fascinates.

Palmer divides the Ode into three movements. The first part emphasises the colours of ripeness and decay, the yellow and brown tints usually associated with this season.

"Autumn is a brown and yellow time".
The leaves fall in showers to the earth, even the church bells seem to repeat the dying colours of

autumn, as they ring for the different prayers of the day, chanting that time is passing.

"The gold and brassy bells of change
Letter mournful ding-dongs
To the changing sing-songs
Crying, sighing where the grasses shone
'It is all over
The leaping of life is over
The cherry and the clover are gone"

So the mood of autumn is evoked both through images of colour and sound.

A hushed sadness falls over man as he grieves at this third season of time's mysteries, the two previous being spring and summer, and the fourth and final, winter. The sadness is reinforced by the sight of birds on bare-branched trees and on the shorn stubble fields. "The creeping gray rain", sets the seal of depression on the sad time. Then suddenly the poetry rouses to a sense of vivid bright colours.

"And yet near the heart of weeping there is
mirth"

Many days in autumn are a crystalline blue and the sun shines forth in its glory. Brilliant weeds and berries appear and the erstwhile dirge like knolling of the church bells is changed to the music of the clear strong winds that pierce through the reeds.

The music of Pan's pipes floods the earth. So luxuriant is autumn with life that the hedges loaded with berries seem to bleed out their red fruit.

Then a strange thing happens in autumn, we seem to be on the threshold of spring once more. The skies hesitate between winter and spring—"The sky falters..." turns a tender blue and lovers walk out together. This is the time when two seasons and two stages of life meet, birth and death, youth and age. Thus the aging man in the autumn of his life turns to the young girl like a breath of spring beside him and exclaims at the beauty and fulfilment there is in a time of death and loss too. It is good that the lush green of summer is over, because in its place we have the mellow ripeness, the wisdom of autumn, just before the white peace of death and winter.

Pan's reeds. Pan was a Greek god of the woods and fields. He is a supposed to have played on a instrument made of reeds.

Questions :

1. What does the poet associate autumn with ?
2. What does the old man discover and tell the girl ?
3. Name the seasons that are mentioned in this poem.

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Alfred Noyes

APPEARANCE AND REALITY

The poet inverts our common notion of appearance and reality. The real is the hereafter, the spiritual the unseen, and appearance is the earthly, the palpable, the seen. Effulgent light and unutterable love flood the hereafter, wheraas this life is described through images that suggest imprisonment, darkness, smothering and shrouding. Our whole notion of immensity shrivels before the poet's vision of the expansive luminosity of the after-life.

" .. Our rounded skies, the wide, the deep
Seem but a small dark cloud, a sphere of night."

What we in our ignorance call living is nothing but a deep sleep in which our future souls lie drowned. The real and immortal self lies latent within the body, to be born after death. The mystics have talked of the "second born" that is those who discover God or Reality after there initial physical first birth. This poem too deals with our second birth, in which the mortal is shed and the soul released into eternity. The released are free of illusions and one with Truth. Earth images however are employed to describe the state of heavenly bliss,

since no poet knows of any other forms. Thus the liberated

"Walk on firm ground and swim in living
streams."

They tread upon, "wringing high-roads" and our "strong hills", "valleys of Beauty" and the "bare scared rocks of Truth". Roads, hills, rocks are an impressive assembly of natural phenomena that create vistas of unending distances and heights. The experiences of change and suffering in this temporal world have been used by these spirits in the life after death to add grace and wisdom to the eternity of youth enjoyed in the hereafter.

Continuing with earth images Noyes evokes suggestions of eternity by coupling the endless with the temporal The second born live in "century-peopled cities", that is cities that endure forever.

"Theirs is the central universal host."

Again we have vast numbers implied by the word "host", but these vast numbers are souls and they are "central", or the heart of truth or reality.

Stanzas 3 and 4 are both heavy and powerful with images that convey darkness, swaddling and suffocation. This life is a fraud, because our true selves, our souls are muffled by mists of illusion, "cloud-wrack round us furled" (Stz. 3). We are barred behind strong gates that block out the vision

of the eternal. After death these burst asunder. There is now blessed releasing light, "Light beyond light." The sensuous snares of the colours and sounds of this earth fall away from before our sight and we are able with cleansed perceptions to "see" our dead friends, who are now invisible to the fleshly sight. Far from celebrating this life and this body as so many poets have done, Noyes finds it all a cumbersome burden. The physical is alien to the spiritual ; where some theologians and philosophers have tried to wed the body to the soul, Noyes sees them as irrevocable opposites. Only after death can man experience unbounded joy and peace. When the shroud of life is lifted, when the locks of the temporal world are shattered will there be fact utopias that men here on earth have dreamed of. Now freedom will harmonize with law or restraint, intellect with the emotions and the will, will naturally fall in line with these harmonized opposites. Men will cease to have to force themselves to abide by the good and the perfect or the "absolute harmony."

This achieved stanza 6 tries to imagine our first waking in the hereafter. While alive in human form we had a vague sense of the eternal truth, now this truth will meet us straight clear and strong. May be it will be through a voice or the touch of a hand, known means of transition to the unknown. Then

the "full memory" of our heavenly home will come flooding our consciousness, a memory of which we only had glimpses, by fits and starts in this life.

Understanding will be complete. Noyes uses the image of eyes to convey this state of perfect comprehension, "eyes that understand" because eyes are the windows of the soul, and eyes reveal volumes, which words cannot do. Love is synonymous with understanding. Understanding breaks down the barriers between I and you, This and That, with understanding division dissolves and we experience oneness. This is love. Such love is "inarticulate" because it is perfect. Only the imperfect needs to use words, crude man-made agents of commerce in the temporal world. The perfect is inexpressible, thus love is silent and silently this love meets with love, when we are freed by death. The poem is interesting because it creates an unusual view of Reality. It liberates us from hopes and fears, that plague us as long as we desire and cling to sensuous reality. It offers great joy to man in the future and makes one look forward to death's release. It also changes our perspective about values. When in this life we begin to disassociate ourselves from the things of the flesh, physical beauty, wealth and power do not seem so attractive any more. A whole new re-evaluation sets in. Much of what we like begins to appear cheap and tawdry, and as our sense of spiritual

truth is reinforced we feel stronger in the midst of this changeful life.

Century peopled eities :—literally a century is a hundred. This phrase is a poetic way of expressing the concept of cities of eternity.

Questions :

1. What is Appearance and Reality according to the poet ?
2. What are the characteristics of heavenly Reality and earthly Appearance ?
3. Do you agree with the poet's view of appearance and reality ?

Gerald Gould

THE EARTH CHILD

The poem is an exultant celebration of the fusion between the poet's body, mind and emotions, and mother earth. To be thus identified is a source of great pleasure and freedom. The deep hidden sources of life in the recesses of the earth have nourished him : and the roar and thunder of the sea

are likened to his heart-beats. The ancient hills have known him from childhood and the wind has been and still is his playmate.

Now as an adult the hills call up ideals and the desire for high adventure

"...They breed desire
Of a tune that the feet may march to and not tire."

The hill roads are symbolic of an endless spiritual quest ; even when they pass beyond the physical sight they continue forever into regions unknown in the eye of the imagination.

The poet responds to the variety of morning and evening. The day has its joys and so also the night. His being goes out to the mystery of the stars and as he hears the demanding thunder of the waves beating on the shore, his soul understands this tumultuous call of the sea. The substance of the earth and its waters make up the body that encages his dangerous dreams. These dreams possess both body and mind and make them encompass the farthest reaches of the earth. In short the poet is whirled into union with the depth and the scope of the earth. The poets identity has been projected and merged into the grand, sonorous and volatile aspects of nature. We see the puny human body abosrbing the earth, and expand:ng into the landscape of the

world. The poem is remarkable for the way in which the human consciousness assumes the proportions of the cosmos.

Questions :

1. What aspects of the earth does the poet identify himself with ?
2. What aspects of the earth or nature has he omitted to identify himself with ?
3. What sort of feelings does nature in our country arouse ; Are they the same as in the poem ?

Julian Grenfell

INTO BATTLE

An exultant war poem from World War I, that celebrates the glory and ecstacy of death in battle. Grenfell writes of the heightened poetic consciousness of one in the passionate embrace of death. The thrill of life can be experienced only by someone who faces imminent death.

"And he is dead who will not fight
And who dies fighting has increase".

Such a death expands, ennobles and merges the being with the cosmos. The vast and varied aspects of nature are taken verse by verse, and identified with the soldier's consciousness. The sun shall give him ardour. The earth sustain him with life, his feet shall capture the nimbleness of the winds and the trees point out aspiration. He shall be the fit companion of the starry constellations. These signify the qualities of gentleness, passion and strength. A combination to be found only in those warriors who are ready to die for God. The sisters seven suggest gentle qualities, and Orion the hunter with his belted sword manly courage, while Sirius the Dog-Star evokes associations of the heat and fury of battle. Nature cooperates to direct and facilitate his task. The forests point out where valleys begin and a ridge end. The noble falcon and the owls lend their keenness of sight and ear to him, and the singing blackbird bids him rejoice in his hour of life. From the horses he imbibes patience and courage. In fact the whole of nature is his friend and ally.

The high point in the soldier's life comes when he is in the burning frenzy of battle. He is oblivious of every thing, held by a flaming passion. Unfaltering, utterly certain that he can only die when God so wills, he fights on as one possessed. No matter when death should claim him, whether by

day or by night it will be a profound comfort and fulfilment.

> "But Day shall grasp him with strong hands,
> And Night shall fold him in soft wings".

Here again is repeated the combination of strength and tenderness, observed in the images of the Sisters Seven and the gaint fighter Orion. Thus although a poem about the fury of battle *Into Battle* is also tender with the sights and sounds of trees and birds, and heavenly gentle ladies. The poet has succeeded remarkably well in ennobling battle, in giving to it a spiritual purpose and in making it the final source of fulfilment for a truly God fearing man.

Dog Star : Sirius called, Dog-Star because it is associated with the hot days of July and August.

Sister's Seven : A constellation of stars named after the seven daughters of Atlas, in Greek mythology. They were placed in the heavens by Zeus.

Orion's Belt : a group of stars name after Orion the hunter slain by the huntress goddess Artemis in the Greek myth.

Kestrel : small hawk or falcon

Questions :

1. What are the qualities of the soldier ?
2. Why is death a fulfilment ?
3. How does nature help the soldiers ?

NEW YEAR

A very sombre poem that refuses to associate the conventional jollity with the New Year. It was obviously written at the end of World War I. Rose Macaulay is obsessed by the repetitive nature of suffering from the dawn of history. Circular images abound in the poem to suggest the routine-like events that overtake men. Mankind is stuck fast to different rotatory moving elements. The earth for one moves round and round from year to year, change is therefore no change, it has all happened before. The suffering of the past is embedded in our unconscious and keeps emerging like a dimly remembered dream. Nature has nothing new to give either and unlike as in so many English poets, Rose Macaulay sees nothing to rhapsodize over in the

"Winds and the skies keen blue,
Woods and the wild cuckoo"

In Gould's poem, *The Earth Child* or in Palmer's *In Autumn : Ad Ode,* Nature is a boon, a source of interest and refreshment. Not so in this poem. The poetess is weary of the sights and sounds of nature. There is a clear cause for this and her depression is not just the mood of an embittered adult. War,

repeated war, keep stabbing at the resurgence of new life. Even a period of Peace is a shoddy affair, the aftermath of war. A time of pale misery and poverty. Peace comes up as a babe washed ashore by the fury of war waves, a helpless puling creature. In her turn she will give birth to a generation of men who will surely become cannon fodder for yet another war.

Basically our dreams and desires have continued the same as those of our primitive ape-ancestors, swinging from trees by strong tails. We have not progressed and are impelled by the same impulses as earlier forms of life. All that moves in a circular motion catches the poetesses attention, and is used to reinforce the sense of the meaningless round of life. The caged squirrel repeats man's rotatory movements, the sun and the moon themselves rise and set and rise and get again, and the sea tides are forever rising and ebbing. All these are like old stage adjuncts or properties pulled out every now and again to refurbish the current play about an old theme—that is on at the moment.

Rose Macaulay is overcome by the weight of the unhappiness "that has been and shall be again". No New Year can really offer a change from the red suffering of history.

"All this our sad estate was known of yore,
In old words red with pain"

The horror and the agouy of this accumulated suffering mounts to its pitch in stanza 5. Fiery wars and drear cold winters have wracked the bodies and minds of mankind. All is vanity; kings, nations, cities have come and gone, men have cried to God in extreme anguish, forgotten Him and yet again stretched out their hands to Him, amidst the ever falling grey rain of desolation. Misery at its peak begins to ebb like the tide, hope and honour have their resurgence and fall back again before the rushing tide of war.

The last stanza introduces a new theme. If perchance something new were to come with the New Year, men would not know how to cope with it. They would be bewildered and lost. We have grown inured to the old pain, it is a familiar routine. The new or inexperienced would be even a worse torment. Now we are atleast numbed by repetitive suffering, then we would be in the grip of ice-cold fear. Better the known devil than the unknown. The heavy cumulative agony of aeons of suffering suddenly changes in the last stanza to panic and crazed bewilderment. Men are unused to anything different from ancient pain, they would go wild with fear before the new and the good. As a conclusion Rose Macaulay seems to imply that old suffering is to be preferred to anything else. A wry observation bespeaking despair of the human condition.

This poem offers an interesting contrast to Roberts *On the Road.* In that poem man is the maker of his destiny here, and the winner of immortality in the hereafter. In this poem Rose Macaulay is sunk deep in staticity. Roberts sees man as free and joyous, Rose Macaulay as destined and miserable.

Questions ;

1. Why will the New Year bring nothing new ?
2. What is the worst form of suffering according to the poetess that men can undergo ?
3. Why is the new not welcome ?

Laurence Binyon

FROM WINTER SUNRISE

To appreciate the magic significance of the sunlight in the poem we must remember that in England, specially in winter, the sun is seldom seen, being muffled in heavy grey skies. The poet is therefore inspired when a bare cold winter room is silently and unexpectedly touched with a sign that the sun has appeared.

It has been dark and damp and as he awakes expecting the usual gloomy day, he begins to see the shadowed outlines of the potted jasmine plant take shape on the wail. The finely etched lines of emerging branch and bloom are likened to the surfacing of a sweet lost memory. The memory like the shadow on the wall comes up unexpectedly, softening and lending beauty to an event which it actually did not have. Likewise the pencilled shadow on the wall is more beautiful than its reality in the Tuscan pot.

Binyon's conjunction of a rare shadow on the wall, and the revival of a memory is unusual subtle and sensitive.

Tuscan pot : a pot from Tuscany, a province in Italy.

Question :

1. What connection is there between the sun, the shadow and the memory in the poem ?

C. Day Lewis

THE ALBUM

The poet is looking into an album with old photographs of his beloved. The first picture he comes upon is of her as a child. The print has nearly faded, the child that was, has long since vanished into an entirely different adult. However those were the years when the poet did not know this child and a longing arises in his heart to have shared his beloved's enthralling childhood. In his imagination he calls out "Wait, wait for me!" as children do when playing. There is no waiting because the next page shows a clear transition. The child has grown into a tall graceful girl, head arched like an iris, her whole demeanour seems to be asking herself what her heart really desires. She stands by some waters with the question in her heart. What answer she gets by gazing into those waters is a prophecy which can only be proved or disproved by time. Nothing is certain at this stage, life has just opened its endless horizons of possibilities. Dreams of love wrap the beloved, and again as in the first stanza the poet regrets he was not by her at this time of her life to warn her "Love is not what you dream" He

feels the vulnerability of the young flower—like creature, and from his vantage point in present time judges that she can be hurt by love.

The bud of the second stanza is the blooming girl of the third stanza. Her youth and beauty are at their heyday. She stands intoxicated by the homage paid her "courted and caressed", she is the centre of worshipping adoration. And yet again the sight of this snapshot makes the poet yearn he had been by her to utter a warning.

> ..."Give not the those charming desperadoes
> What was made to be mine".

Actually it is natural jealousy aroused by the thought of his beloved being loved by others. She was ultimately to be his—yet she had to go through a period when she was not his. These years and moments he regrets in every one of the first three stanzas.

The times of the album are long since passed. There is then no record of the old age which has begun to creep over the beloved, The blossoming girl had to be stripped of her beauty by the gales of suffering. Now looking at the pictures of her glorious youth he feels he is looking into the crystal ball that foreshadows the blasting of youth. So in this stanza too the poet introduces himself to sum up as it were his sense of dismay after looking upon

the pictures of his beloved. Her past triumphant stages of life are viewed from the perspecttve of the present, and forgetting his jealousy Day Lewis is shattered by the impermanence of beauty. The beloved grew old with the poet—just as he was unable to share her childhood and youth, so now he realizes he was powerless to preserve her beauty.

The album has been gone through and closed and the poet is haunted by all those irreclaimable scenes and years of which he was not a part. Then his eye falls on the loved one beside him. She blossoms again with their love and tells him that all that he feels he missed by looking into the album of the past, has become his in the present. The present has made up for the years when she was not his.

It is interesting to study this poem besides Yeats' *When You Are Old.* There are two different treatments of the old age of the beloved in these poems. Yeats' beloved is seen as "old and grey and full of sleep". Day Lewis' as

> "... a tree stripped bare
> By intemparate gales..."

Yeats rejected in love flees to commune with the stars, Day Lewis wins his love and they grow old together, making up for all the lost years. Both Yeats and Day Lewis went through the purgatory

of jealousy, Yeats consoles himself that since he loved Maud Gonne's "pilgrim soul" his love was superior to that of her other admirers. Day Lewis' love has a happy ending. Although the poem shows the marks of regret at time lost and the pain of witnessing age mar a beautiful face, the man and woman both love each other. Yeats' fate was poetically tragic. He "hid his face in a crown of stars", because his love was not returned. *The Album*, does not have the same dramatically heroic end. It is in another key altogether. The beloved is there to console and comfort ; to bridge the gap between the past and the present, between youth and age.

Wystan Hugh Auden

AS I WALKED OUT ONE EVENING

This poem treats of three aspects of Time. The first verse describes the impact of the crowds "upon the pavement" one winter evening. Full grown and full of life they are nevertheless destined for death's scythe. There is however the confident voice of love. The lover sings blithely of the eternity of his love.

Only the utterly impossible can make him cease loving. Like all lovers he is certain that *his love* and *his* beloved is an immortal flower, and his is the original, absolute, prefect love. In a way he is right. Every man considers the woman he loves the ideal, and his love the only permanent love, that time cannot change. So juxtaposed to the lover's notion of timelessness is the poet's conviction that all must bow before death. The clocks of the city whirr and chime, relentlessly proclaiming the passage of time. Time is associated with death or the Nightmare. There is no mercy here, only Justice. For all you get you have to pay, the price. So while men love and are kissing, Time coughs politely, so to speak, to remind them that this love is not to last. The cough is a sort of dry comment interjected upon the lover's belief that love is forever. Time corrodes unobtrusively through niggling pains and worries. Time also conquers openly and unashamedly when it swoops up the young and the active.

"Into many a green valley
Drifts the appaling snow ;
Time breaks the threaded dances
And the divers brilliant bow."

So far the verses have described activity and movement. The lover loves and death takes. Now follow verses of quiet meditation (10-14) in which time stands still as Auden looks within and assesses his life.

Men are wont to stare into water, especially still water to learn of themselves. Hands soaked in a basin of water do encourage the inward look and a self-summing up. Most of us have secrets hidden away like skeletons in cupboards. There are guilts unfaced and there is the unadmitted failure of love. Has it all been a story of loss then? No, you cannot in all honesty admit to that either. As you contemplate your face in the mirror you cannot honestly say to yourself that life has been a disaster. It is still a gift—it is you who have been ungenerous incapable of giving where you received.

"O look, look in the mirror,
O look in your distress;
Life remains a blessing
Although you cannot bless".

Then again standing idly at a window, gazing blankly into space, scalding tears start up, the unfamiliar sentiment of love for one's sinful neighbour rises in one's own sinful heart. The tears humanize and make beautiful the deformed soul.

The last movent of the poem (verse 14) leaves behind a sense of peace and continuity because of the power of human love. The clocks may chime and stop, lovers may come and go, beginnings and ends continue in a regular procession, but all change can be absorbed by the heart that loves and accepts.

It is the deep river that runs on. In such a mood a man is outside the reach of time, no longer afraid of being its victim, he can contemplate its activity and still be at peace.

Thus in this poem we have the changes wrought by Time, then the Timelessness or Immortality of the Lover and finally the mature state of standing still, in the midst of Time—that is of living in Time, yet being unaffected by it

Seven stars : The Pleiades.

tread dances : dances in which the dancers weave intricate patterns of movements.

diver's brilliant bow ; The arch or bow-like figure that a swimmer's body assumes before diving into water from an eminence.

Questions :

1. Give examples of the aspects of Time described in the poem.

2. What conclusion does the poet come to about Time and life ?

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THE UNKNOWN CITIZEN

The poem is a satire on the typical citizen produced by modern Western society. His name is not known because where industrialized mass production reigns supreme, the human being is unimporant. What matters are the goods produced, their sales and the profits they bring. The Unknown Citizen is dead now, but like millions of others he has been registered in the state dossiers as a number only. The identity of the man the name, which would have proclaimed his individuality are anonymous. He is just a statistical number JS/07/M/378 : The monument erected by his government in his honour is made of cold unfeeling marble, symbolic of the death-in life a modern citizen leads.

Western materialism has created the Over-Organized Man All human impulses, thoughts and acts are ground down to fit the demands of the highly efficient machine. Self-respect and creativity vanish, robot-like conformism remains. In such a society a man's life like the machine must be predictable, the original and the unusual is suspect. Every citizen is from child-hood tailored to a fixed pattern and strictly watched for deviations. The Unknown Citizen was an example of this desirable

standard. He served the greater Community in which all individuality is smoothed over in the cause of mechanical efficiency. Trade Union activity once a mark of non-conformism and criticism has now been reduced to a managable element of modern society. The norm in such a society is the Average. The Average is arrived at through statistical calculation and since it has been assessed that men tend to belong to trade unions one who does not idenitfy with a trade union is a suspect, a scab or a traitor. The Greater Community and the State accept trade unionists because they are known entities whose thoughts actions and reactions are controlled having been statistically measured.

The Press initially intended to be the agent of free constructive thought in a democratic society, is in fact as conformist and materialistic as everyone else. It functions to make profits. In a society where mass consumption is encouraged the normal man is one therefore who buys a newspaper daily, and is brainwashed by the advertisements therein into amassing the commodities advertised. Consumer man is beleagured in to buying and buying. There are apart from advertisements the tempting tentacles of various Instalment Plans. He falls a ready victim to a system that makes him pay more and also be in debt for something he probably does not need. Human worth in a consumer Society being measured not in terms

of virtues and qualities but in terms of the quantities of goods one possesses. "A gramaphone, a radio, a car, a frigidaire". Since this is so men are no longer free, spiritual agents, instead they are equated with objects and things that can be bought.

This Unknown Citizen a replica of millions of others, seems to have produced his children automatically too—certainly he feels no sense of responsibility for them. He never bothered about the kind of education they were getting. The modern well organized state takes over all human responsibilities, leaving its members a helpless mass of plasma to be moulded into one common shape.

The point of the poem is that society is made for man and not man for society. Men are not men, unless they are free and happy. No man is free and happy unless he can bear responsibility, discharge it, and so establish contact with his fellow beings. This is only possible in a society where the spiritual and human values come before the lust for wealth and yet more wealth.

> "Was he free ? Was he happy ? The question is absurd :
> Had any thing been wrong, we should certainly have heard."

The question of freedom and happiness just does not arise for the authorities of such a society.

Here where all is neatly filed, organized, executed what place do freedom and happiness have? None at all. The man was alright because he was quiet and conformed—if he had been dissatisfied the efficient government apparatus would surely have known—and would have proceeded to tame the fellow down. In other words freedom and happiness do not matter—they are negligible before the monster Organization.

Bureau of Statistics : Imaginary but typical name given to an office where numerical facts are systematically collected and arranged.

Producers Research and High Grade Living : Imaginary, typical names of organizations interested in creating and encouraging demand for consumer goods.

Questions :

1. Why is the dead man known as the Unknown Citizen?
2. What are the characteristics of a modern man in Western Society?
3. What values does Auden stand for.?

Louis MacNeice

JUNE THUNDER

Two weather moods are presented and contrasted in this poem. In the opening it is a perfect June day —one of many that have been enjoyed. MacNeice has been driving his car through country lanes lined with cow-parsley and mustard, flanked by bolly marshalled hawthorn hedges and chestnut trees. There have been drives surrounded by rich green beech trees, where the yellow broom and gorse have blown, to proclaim the zest of the once again returned June. Wisdom warns that these June days have little reality.

..."but I note as more appropriate
To the maturer mood impending thunder"

What is truer of the English weather is thunder, lightening and rain. Suddenly the sky turns a threatening indigo, a hush falls, the coming storm catches the tree tops, the curtain in the room is swept inwards, birds toil homewards, and as the drop curtain of rain sweeps over the trees their frail blossoms are obliterated. Now comes the cleansing downpour of rain, seeming to wash us clean of our old whims and sentimentalities, the indulgences of

youth and a clear June day. Those disappear before the reality of summer rain that makes nothing of the scenes of sun and foliage. It is only eight thirty in the evening and night has already advanced. In the storm the clouds tumble like broken bits of building. The unsheathed sword of the pride maddened archangel Lucifer flashes lightening.

The poem makes us unbearably aware of the swiftness with which a sunny tranquil scene can be shattered by a storm. The poet is therefore led into wishing that his beloved would somehow overcome the sheets of rain and moats of water and be with him, now, in this weather. A psychological reading of the conclusion appears to reveal the poet's desire for continuity through the presence of his beloved. In the midst of the all-destroying storm she would be a pledge that their relationship at least is permanent.

The Junes : June days.

dropscene : painted curtain, rolled on a roller in front of the stage of a theatre.

Blackness at half past eight : It could be half past eight in the morning, but we should keep in England in mind that it is bright day light in June at half past eight in the evening.

Keith Douglas

THE SEA BIRD

The poem is a composition of impressions of silence death and stillness, coupled with utter vastness, fantastic speed and colour. The poet has combined these contraries mainly through the image of two birds, one dead and one alive. In the end they merge into each other, and the contradiction between life and death, inertness and speed are resolved.

The poet walks beside the warm Mediterranean sea, summer is suggested, the atmosphere is somnolent, he comes upon on arched cliff round which the sea seems to turn. His thoughts are relaxed and wandering, but these are folded away, the curtain is drawn as one sight takes hold of his imagination. There is a dead bird and a live bird. The sockets of the dead bird's eyes are hollow, in contrast the eyes of the live bird are vivid, he has seen the poet and with his brilliant colours (contrasting with the black rock) he soars into the air. Here we have an impression of the apposites of stillness and impetuous speed.

"I turn from the dead bird to watch him fly" a sparse, open, large landscape. There is the sea, the sky, the coast, some rocks and nothing more. This flash of colours moves rapidly in the sky looking for a destination in the vastness. We now see a compact ball of blue and orange justaposed with the endless heavens.

"......So swift he
Searches about the sky for room"

The beautiful bird is seen piercing the sky, rising up in spire-like harmony with the "cliff of this coast". As he rises higher and higher he seems to be absorbing and draining away all the colours of the sea and the coast leaving them pale and colourless. The poet loses sight of the swiftly moving bird, he is vanished into the unknown, lost, gone and strangely enough now for him as dead as the dead sea bird. The inertness of the dead bird and the swiftness of the live bird's flight both create a sense of life at an emphatic end. Nevertheless we are left with a vision of a brightly flashing meteor of light disappearing in the skies distance, lost physically but a thing to haunt the imagination, even after a reading of the poem is over.

Stilletto Wing : a stilletto is a small tapering dagger. The bird's wing is small and pointed.

Questions :

1. Why is the dead bird like the live bird ?
2. What are the peculiar characteristics of the live bird ?

In subjestive poetry
as ~~narrative~~ poetry the
poet says

Second kind of subjecti
poetry is ~~a~~ dramatic
poetry.

as songs, panieggyries, oads,
~~odgjes~~: elegies. Sonnets